Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Executive Council

Communications Coordination Unit

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3085 Albert Street
Regina, Canada
S4S 0B1

Government of Saskatchewan

Public Opinion Polling and Market Research

fromApril 1, 2000 June 30, 2000

Annual subscriptions available at a cost of $100 per year or $25 per quarterly issue from:

Communications Coordination Unit
Executive Council
Rm. 130, Walter Scott Bldg.
3085 Albert Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B1

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100-06883/

Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Executive Council

Date:	**April, 2000**
Supplier:	**Anderson/Fast & Associates, Saskatoon**
Cost:	**$18,400**

Omnibus
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

Saskatchewan Executive Council
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April 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Federal issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, federal taxes, jobs and unemployment, agriculture, the economy and national unity.
- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, agriculture, provincial taxes, and jobs and unemployment.
- Two thirds of residents approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities.
- The vast majority of residents approve of changes the government is making to the justice system, including the way the government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program", targeting funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department, and the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes.
- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents agree that the temperature and/or weather in Saskatchewan has been and will be affected by climate change.
- The majority of residents think climate change is important, but not as critical as other priorities such as health care, taxes and agriculture.
- Slightly less than one quarter of Saskatchewan residents have heard of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation.
- The majority of residents have heard of Innovation Place in Saskatoon and more than one third have heard of the Regina Research Park.
- Approximately one half of Saskatchewan residents indicate they have a good idea of what is in the provincial budget.
- Approximately one half of Saskatchewan residents think the impact of the March 29 Budget will be that they will pay more taxes. One half of residents think it is unfair to pay provincial sales tax on additional goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced.
- The majority (53%) of residents think that the balanced approach taken in the budget was about right given Saskatchewan's financial position.

METHODOLOGY

Anderson/Fast & Associates was retained by the Government of Saskatchewan to conduct the April 2000 public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The April Omnibus Survey contains questions designed to explore public opinion regarding:

- federal issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- provincial issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- the justice system;
- climate change;
- Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation; and
- the provincial budget.

The questions for the survey were provided by Saskatchewan Executive Council and assembled into an interview format by Anderson/Fast. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 1,000 households throughout Saskatchewan. To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

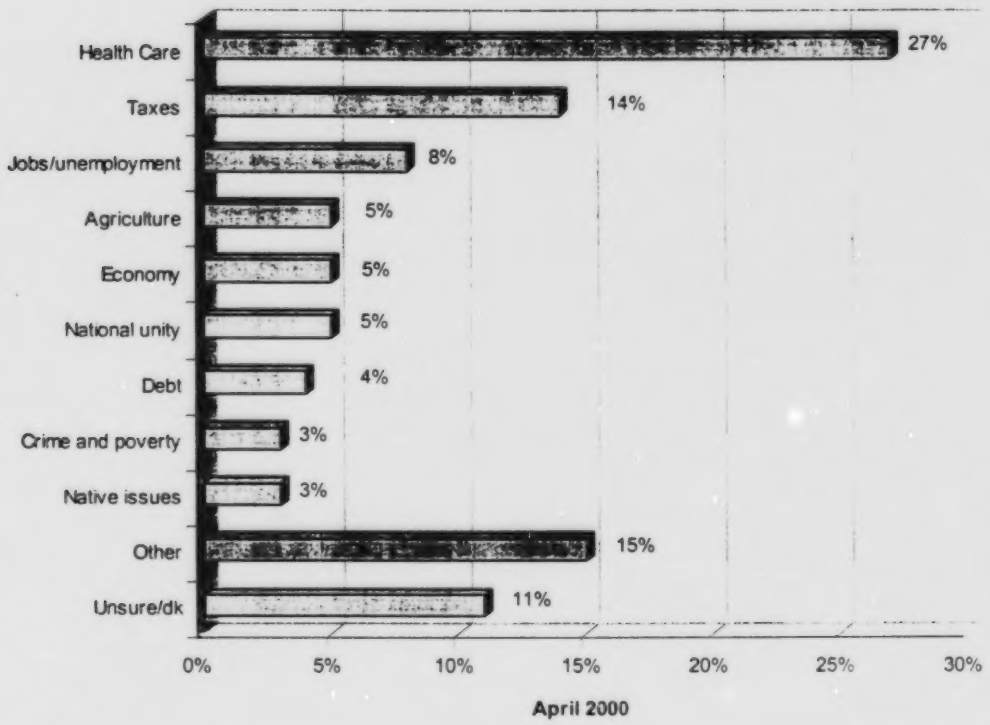
One thousand residents of the province were interviewed over a ten day period between Monday, April 24 and Wednesday, May 3, 2000. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Anderson/Fast's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

The Omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points: reliable results with low variability. Frequency charts for all public opinion issues are illustrated in this report.

Anderson/Fast designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis of data using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. We also conducted statistical tests on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

1.0 General Issues

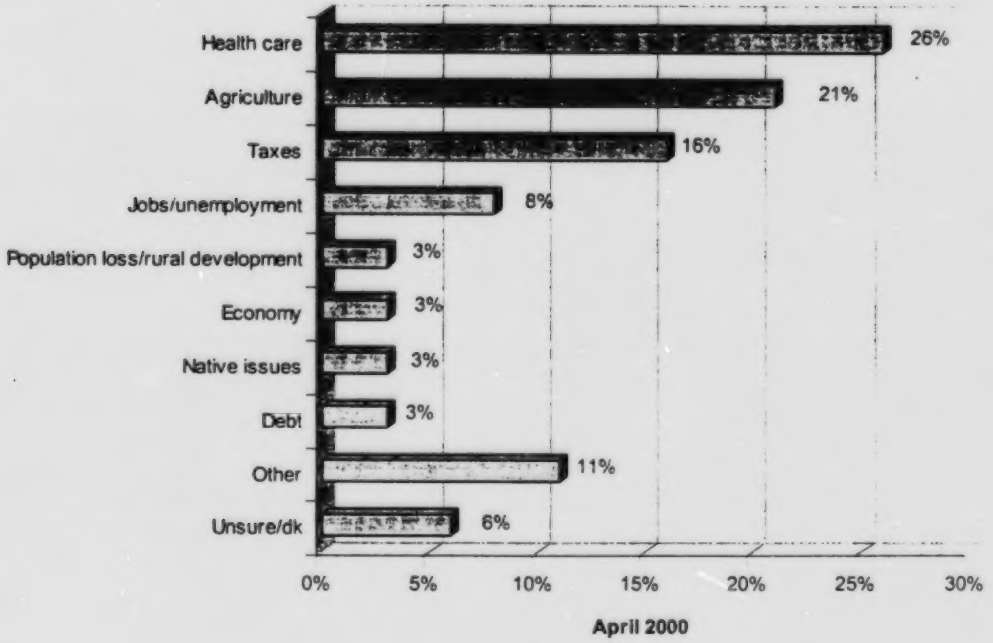
Question 1. In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Canada today?



- According to 27% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include federal taxes (14%), jobs and unemployment (8%), agriculture (5%), the economy (5%), national unity (5%) and the national deficit and accumulated debt (4%).

- Approximately 15% of respondents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (6%), moral, social and religious issues (2%), education (1%) and children and youth (1%).

Question 2. What do you think is the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today?

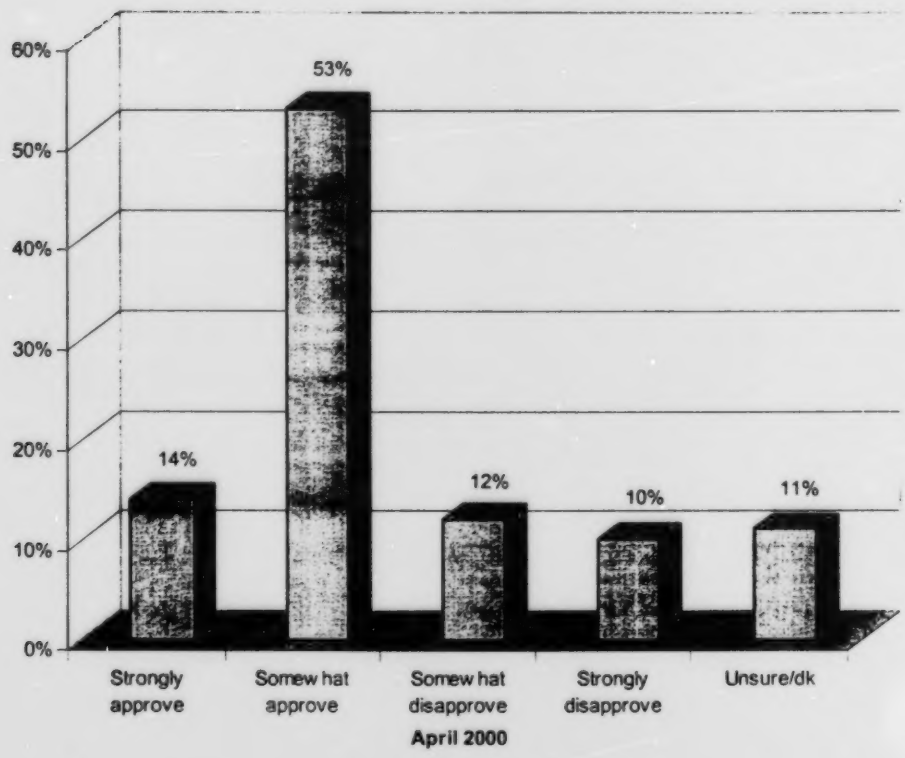


- The most important issue facing the province today, according to 26% of Saskatchewan residents, is health care. Approximately 21% of residents are concerned primarily with agriculture, 16% primarily with taxes, 8% with jobs and unemployment, 3% of respondents are primarily concerned with population loss and rural development, 3% the provincial economy, 3% mention Native issues and another 3% are primarily concerned with the accumulated provincial debt.

- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 11% of respondents are the provincial government in general (3%), highways and transportation (2%), crime and poverty (1%) and education (1%).

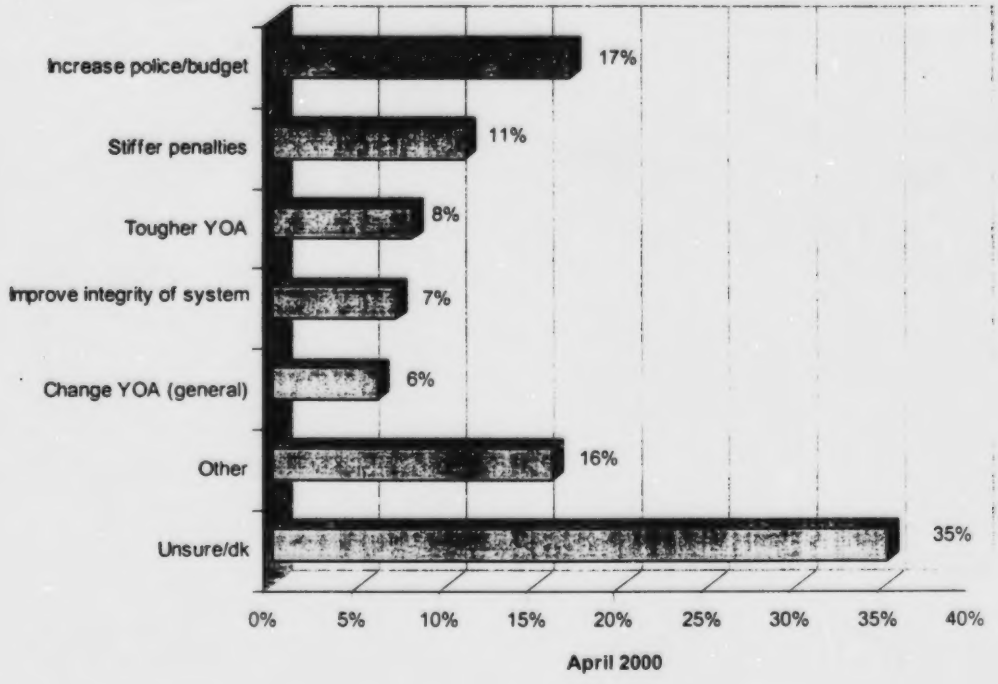
2.0 JUSTICE

Question 3. Do you approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities?



- Two thirds (67%) of residents approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities.

Question 4: What would you like to see changed about the way Saskatchewan's government manages policing and the justice system?

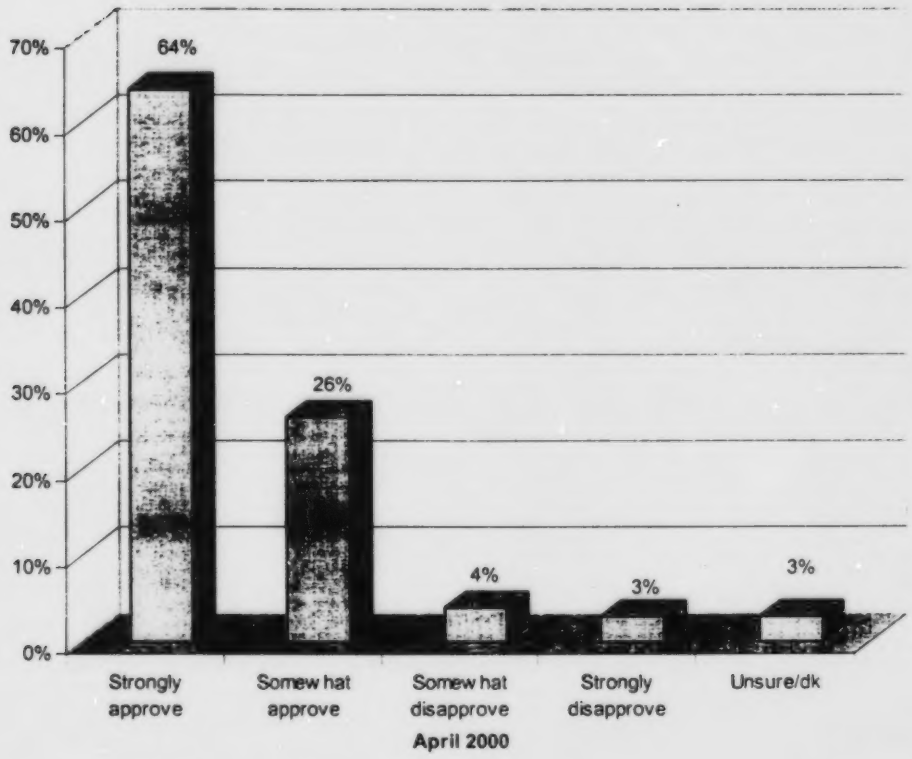


- Approximately 17% of Saskatchewan residents would like the government to increase the budget and hire more police, 11% would like stiffer penalties for offenders, 8% think a tougher young offenders act, 7% mention improving the integrity of the justice system and 6% would like changes to the young offenders act in general.

- About 16% of respondents mention 'other' changes they would like to see to the justice system such as increasing the emphasis on addressing racism and equality issues (3%), Native issues (3%) and improving crime prevention programs (2%).

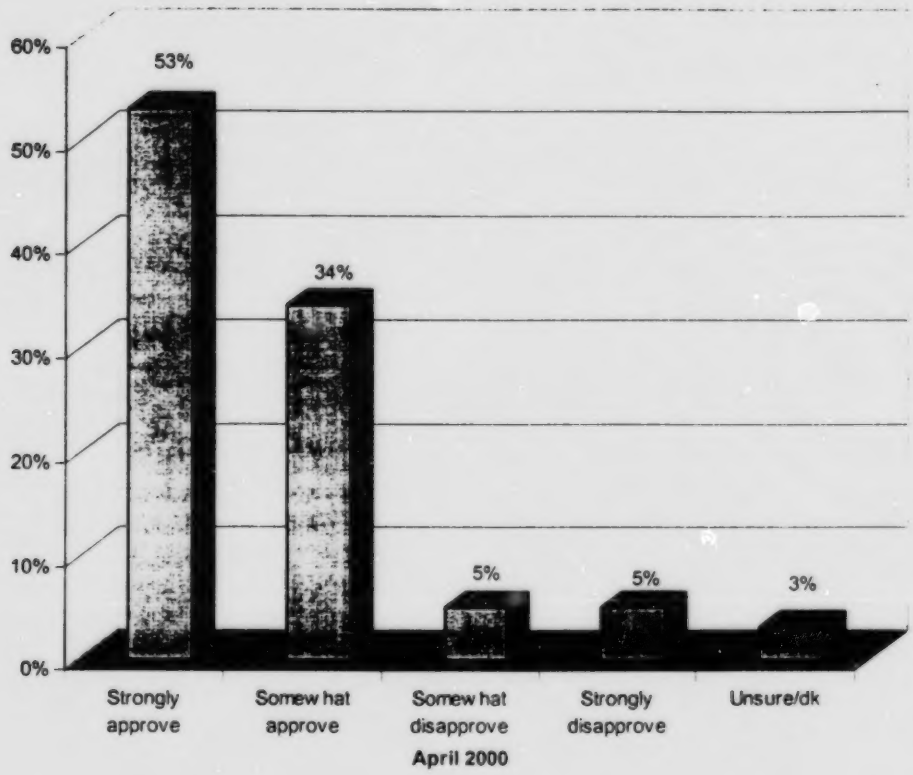
I am going to outline some of the changes the government is making to the justice system. I'd like you to tell me if you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the following initiatives:

Question 5a. The government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program". It's a partnership between police and prosecutors aimed at identifying the minority of young offenders who commit most of the crimes, tracking them, and getting them off the streets.



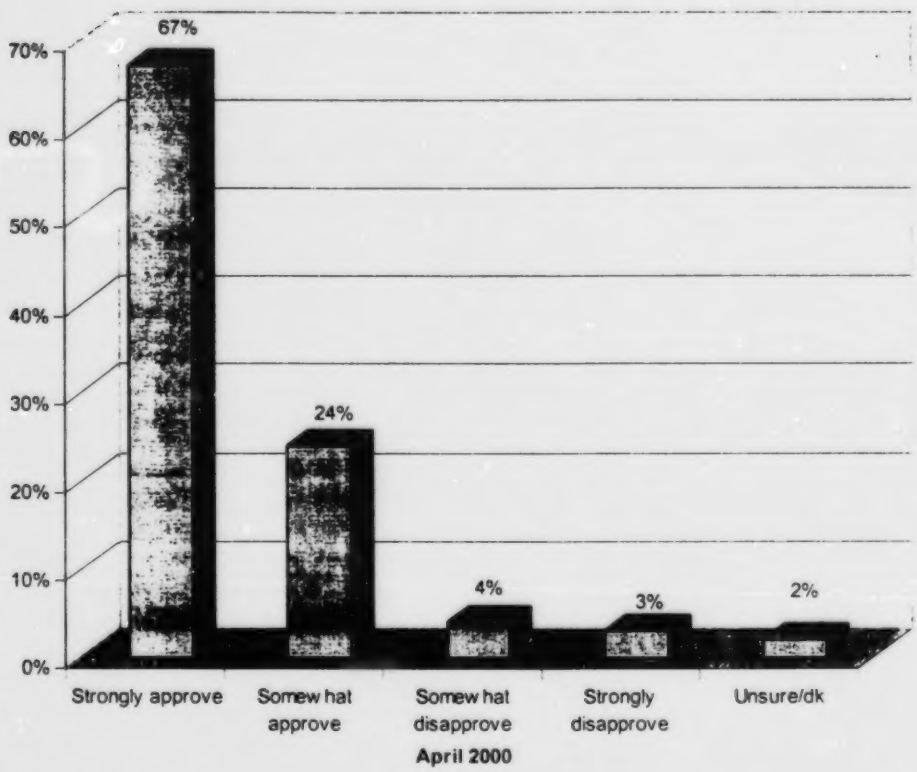
- The vast majority (90%) of residents approve of targeting funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program".

Question 5b. The government has targeted funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department by hiring more prosecutors and support staff so that trials take place more quickly, and prosecutors have more time to work on individual cases.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (87%) approve of targeting funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice system by hiring more prosecutors and support staff.

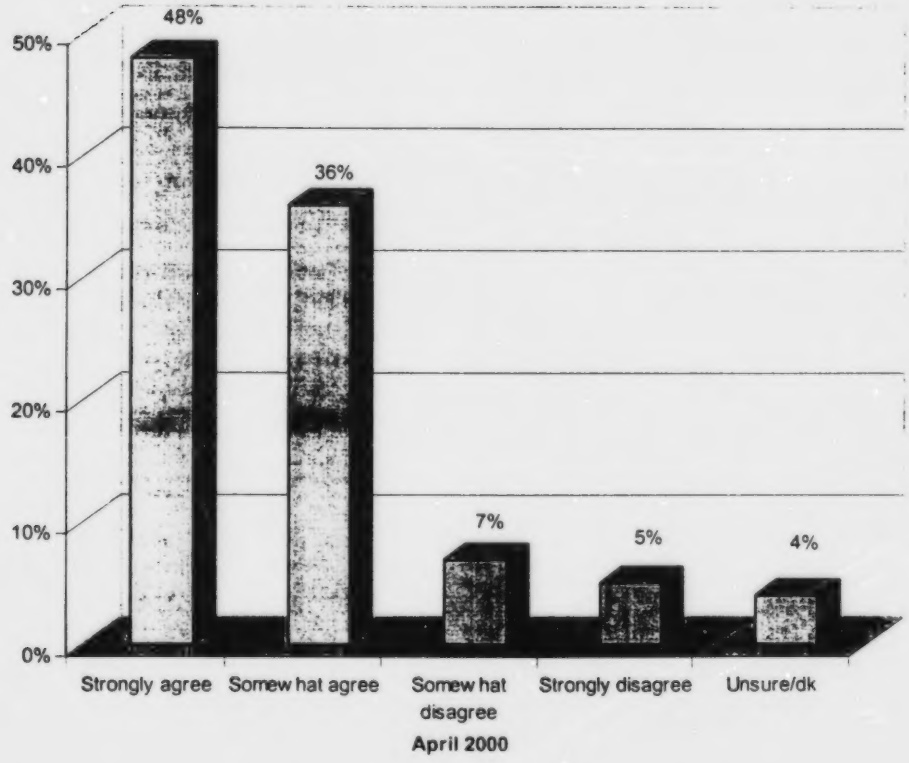
Question 5c. The government has launched a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography, and money laundering committed by organized groups like motorcycle gangs. The task force brings together the RCMP, city police forces, and a special prosecution team.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (91%) approve of the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography and money laundering by organized groups.

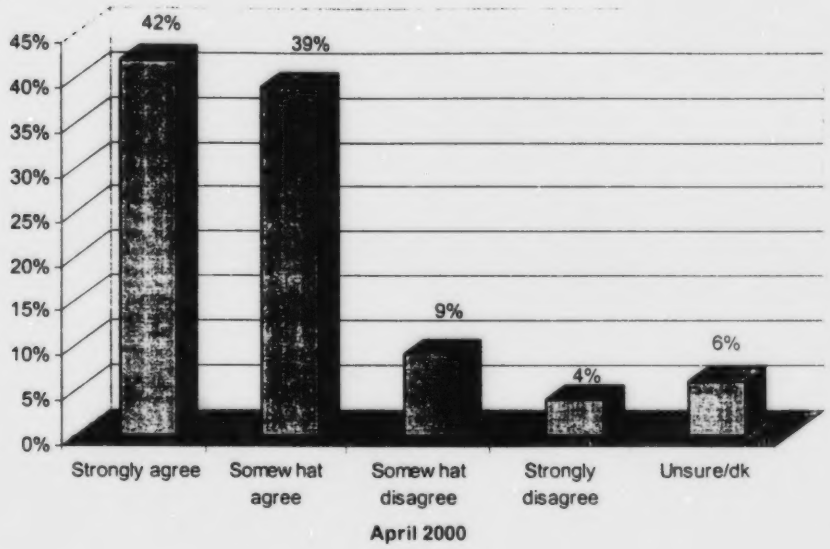
3.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

Question 6. You may have heard about climate change or global warming. Man made emissions of carbon dioxide and other substances, referred to as greenhouse gasses (GHG), are said to be trapping heat from the sun within the earth's atmosphere and raising global temperatures, similar to how a greenhouse's window captures the sun's heat. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that human activities are causing climate change?



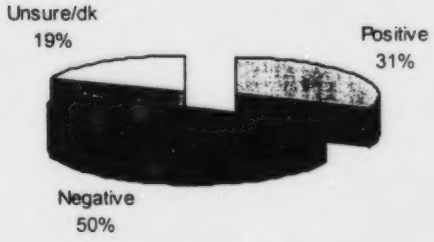
- The large majority (84%) of residents agree that human activities are causing climate change.

Question 7. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the temperature and/or weather in Saskatchewan has been affected by climate change?



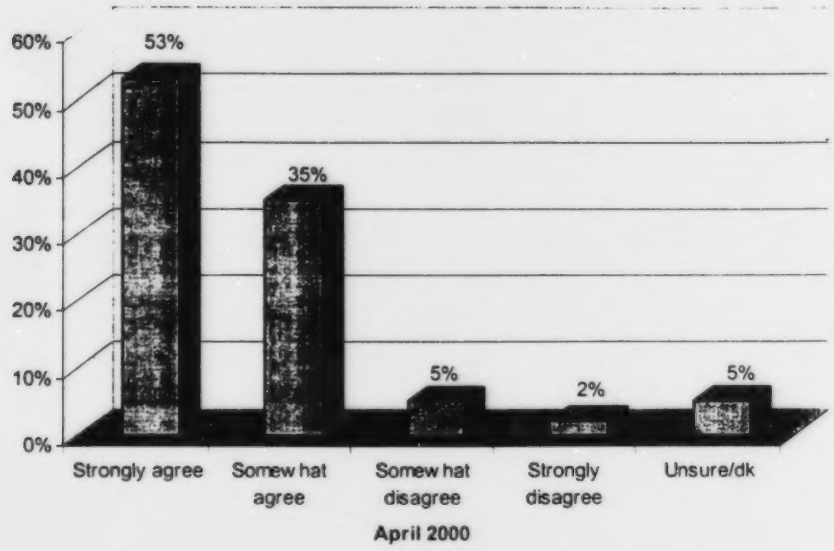
- More than three quarters (81%) of residents agree that the temperature and/or weather in Saskatchewan has been affected by climate change.

Question 7a. Do you think this climate change has had a positive or negative effect for Saskatchewan?



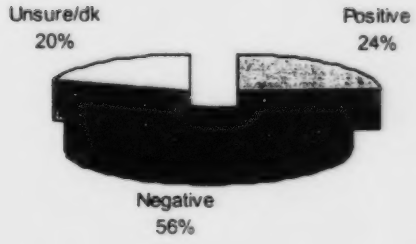
- One half (50%) of those residents who agree that the temperature and/or weather in Saskatchewan has been affected by climate change think this climate change has had a negative influence on Saskatchewan (40% of all residents).

Question 7b. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the temperature and/or weather in Saskatchewan will be affected by climate change?



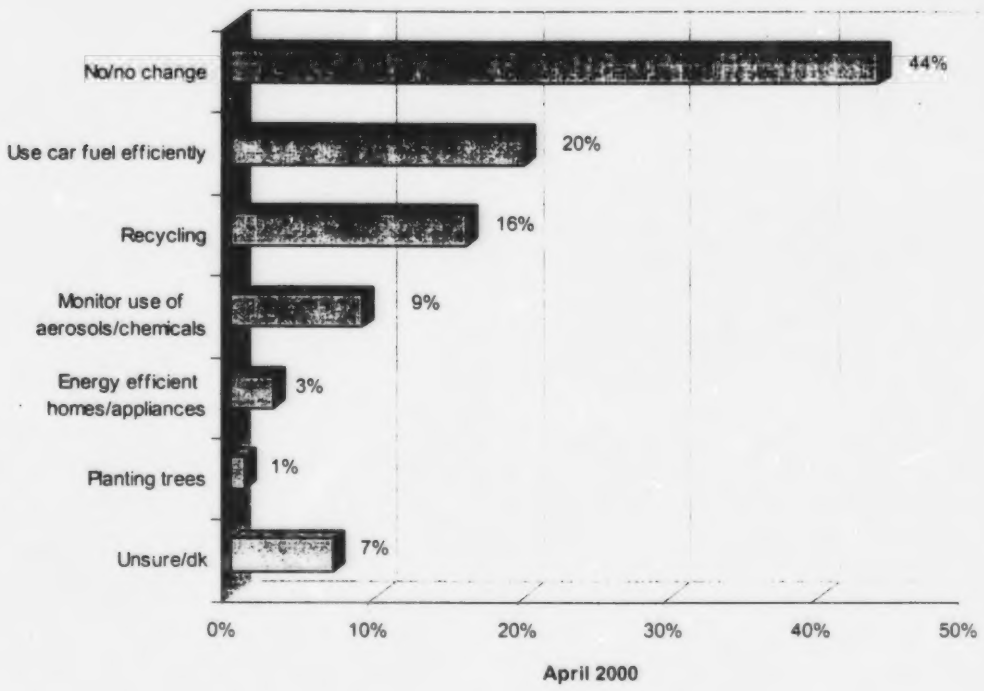
- The large majority (88%) of Saskatchewan residents agree that the temperature and/or weather in the province will be affected by climate change.

Question 7c. Do you think this climate change will have a positive or negative effect for Saskatchewan?



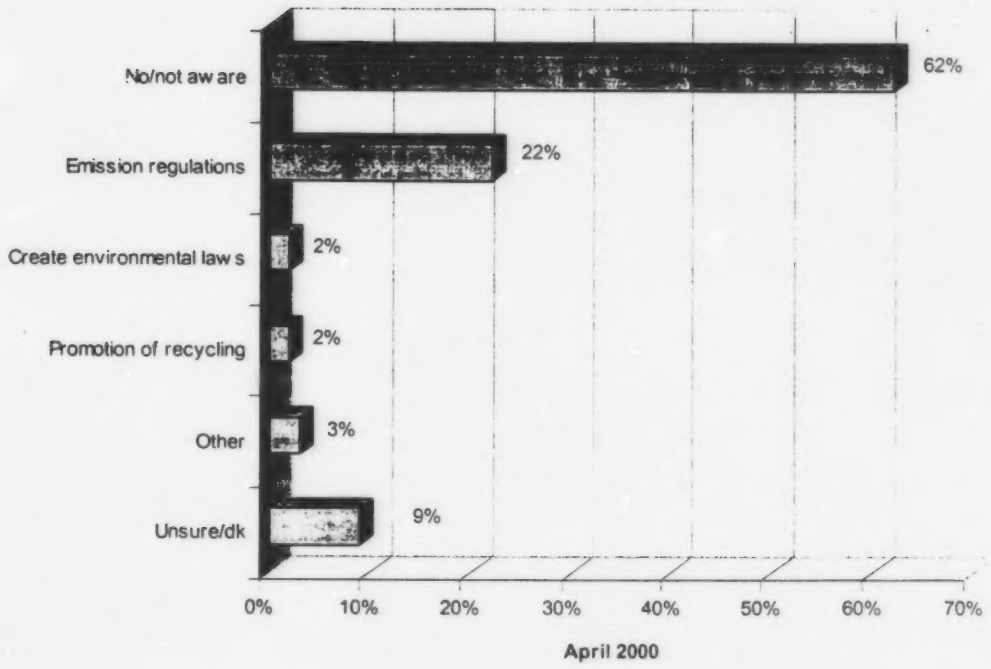
- The majority (56%) of those residents who think that the temperature and/or weather in Saskatchewan will be affected by climate change think this climate change will have a negative effect on Saskatchewan (49% of all residents).

Question 8. Have you changed any of your actions to reduce global warming?



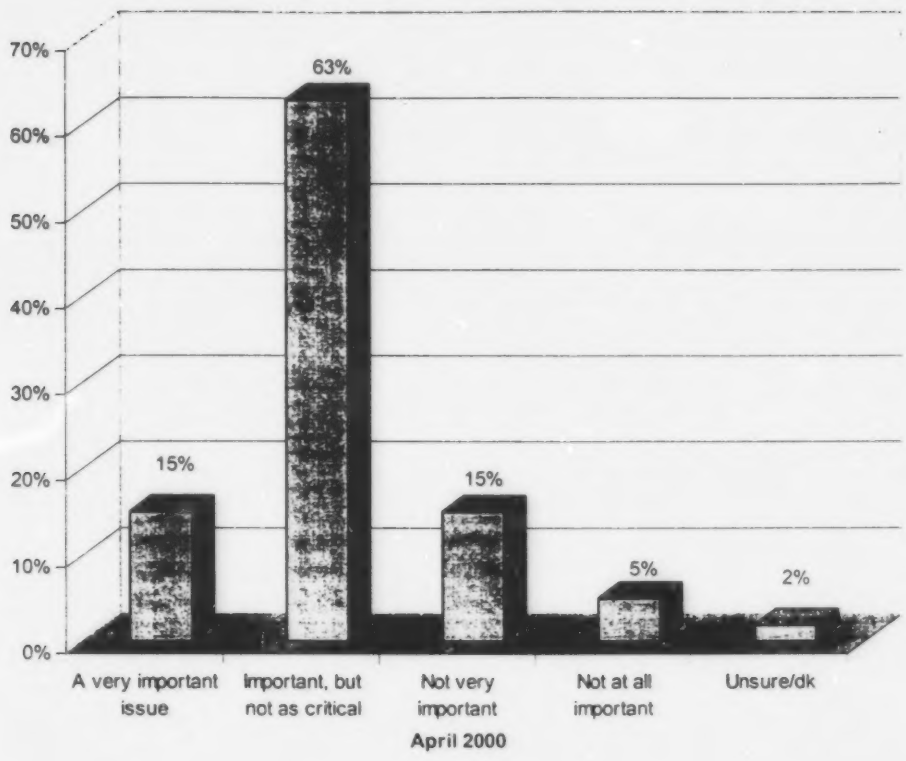
- Slightly less than one half (44%) of Saskatchewan residents have not changed any of their actions to reduce global warming. 20% of residents suggest they are using their car more efficiently, 16% are recycling and 9% are monitoring their use of aerosols, pollutants and chemicals in efforts to help reduce global warming.

Question 9. Are you aware of any actions that government or industry have taken to address climate change?



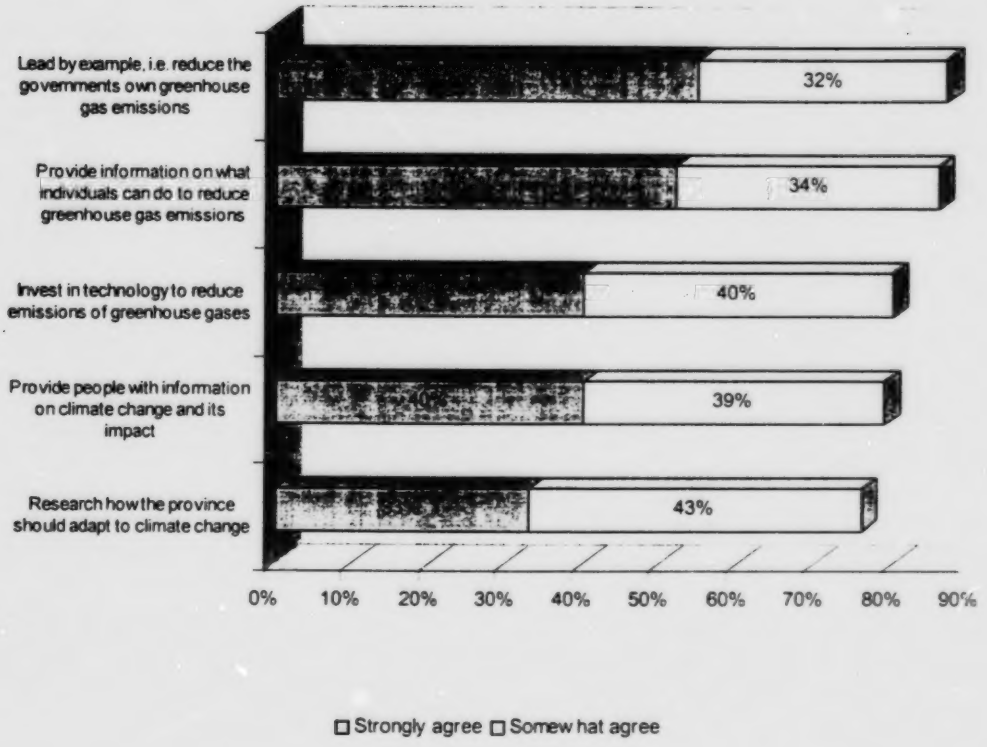
- The majority (62%) of residents are not aware of any actions that government or industry have taken to address climate change. Approximately 22% mention emission regulations to address climate change.

Question 10. Do you think climate change is:



- The majority (63%) of Saskatchewan residents think climate change is important, but not as critical as other priorities such as health care, taxes and agriculture.

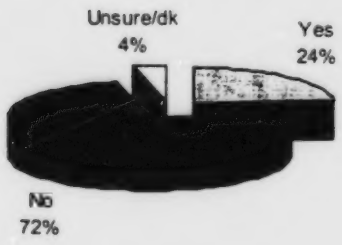
Question 11. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that the province should:



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (87%) think the province should lead by example by reducing the governments' own greenhouse gas emissions, provide information on what individuals can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions themselves (86%), invest in technology to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses (80%), provide people with information on climate change and its impacts (79%) and research how the province should adapt to climate change (76%).

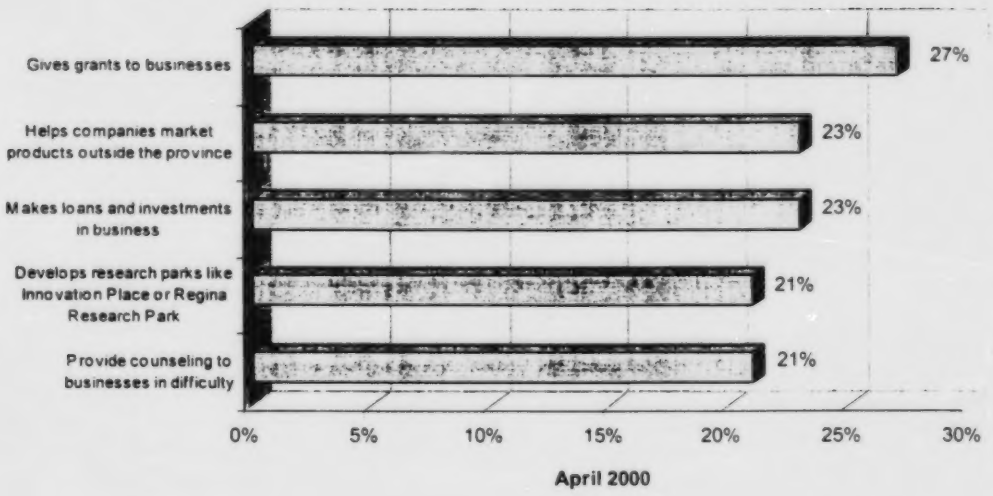
4.0 SASKATCHEWAN OPPORTUNITIES CORPORATION

Question 12. Have you ever heard of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation, usually called SOCO?



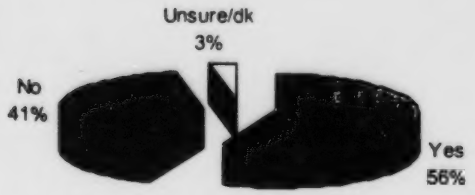
- Approximately one quarter (24%) of Saskatchewan residents have heard of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation.

Question 13. What does SOCO do? Do you think it...



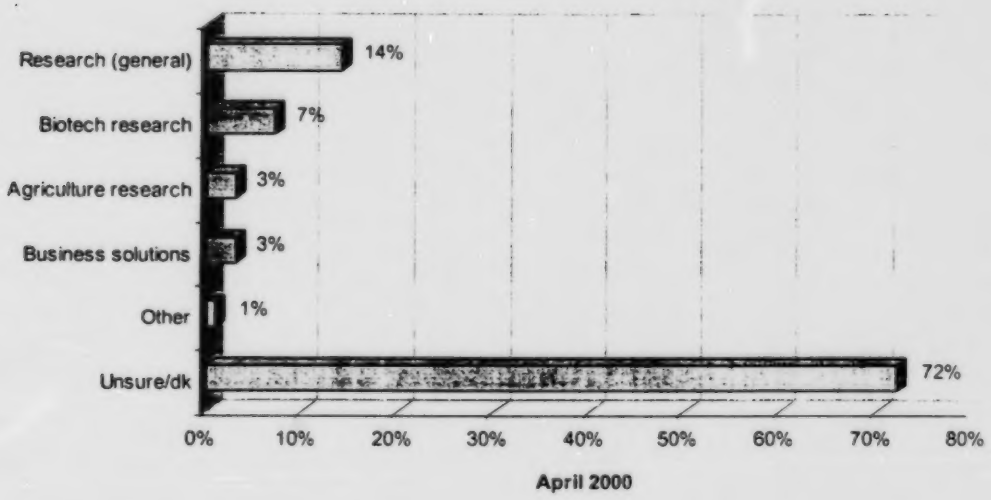
- More than one quarter (27%) of residents think SOCO gives grants to businesses. More than one in five residents think SOCO helps companies market products outside the province (23%), makes loans and investments in business (23%), develops research parks like Innovation Place and Regina Research Park (21%) and provides counseling to businesses in difficulty.

Question 14. Have you heard of Innovation Place?



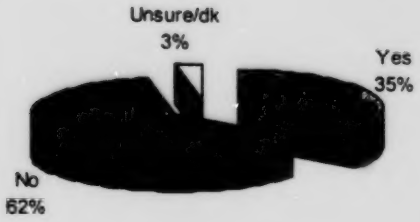
- The majority (56%) of Saskatchewan residents have heard of Innovation Place.

Question 15. Can you name one thing they do at Innovation Place?



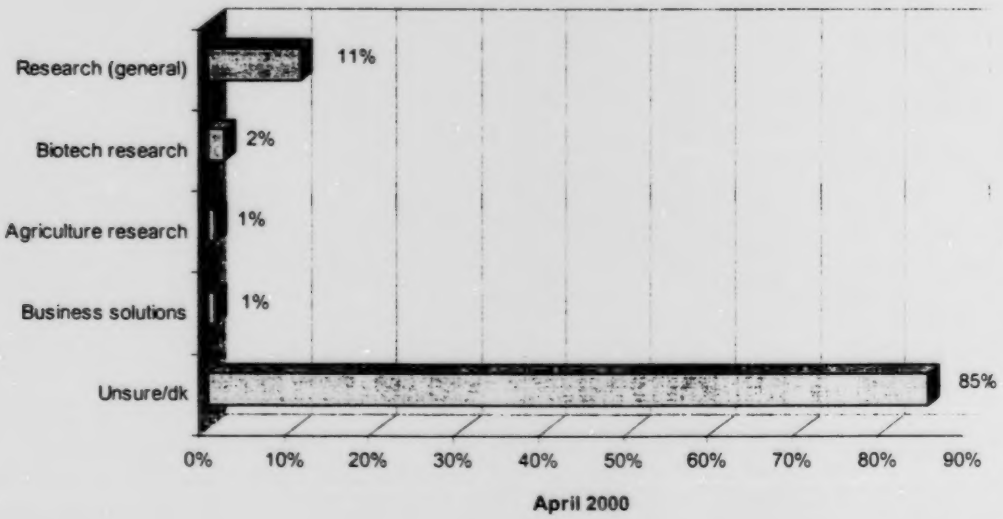
- Slightly less than three quarters (72%) of residents are unable to identify what is done at Innovation Place. Approximately one quarter of residents mention various types of research in terms of what they think is done at Innovation Place.

Question 16. Have you heard of the Regina Research Park?



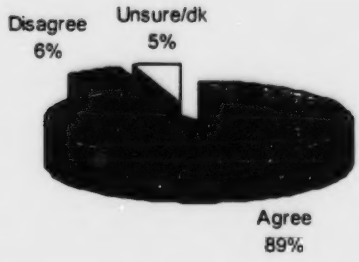
- More than one third (35%) of residents have heard of the Regina Research Park.

Question 17. Can you name one thing they do at the Regina Research Park?



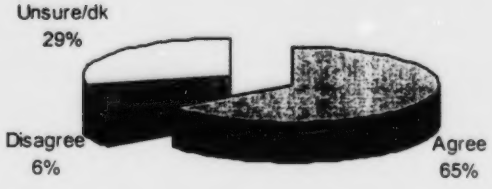
- More than three quarters (85%) of residents are unable to identify what is done at the Regina Research Park. Approximately 11% mention research in general.

Question 18a. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Investing in Saskatchewan businesses contributes to the province's long-term economic development.



- The large majority (89%) of residents agree investing in Saskatchewan businesses contributes to the province's long-term economic development.

Question 18b. Research parks like Innovation Place or the Regina Research Park help to create economic growth and jobs.



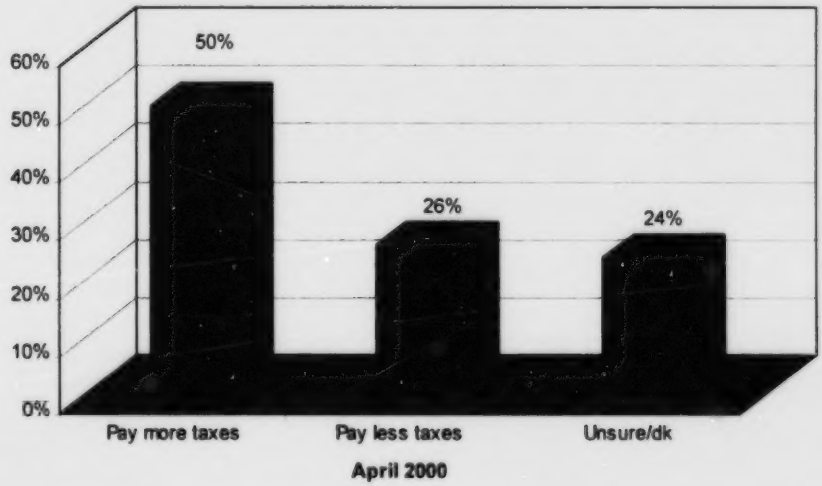
- The majority (65%) of residents agree research parks like Innovation Place and the Regina Research Park help to create economic growth and jobs.

5.0 PROVINCIAL BUDGET

Question 19. The provincial government presented the budget about 3 weeks ago on March 29. Would you say that in general you have a good idea of what's in the budget, or would you say you don't have a good idea what's in it?

- Approximatley one half (49%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate they have a good idea of what's in the budget, 51% don't have a good idea.

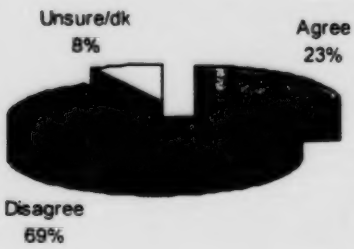
Question 20. What do you think the impact of the March 29 Budget will be on your finances?



- One half (50%) of Saskatchewan residents think the impact of the March 29 Budget will be they will have to pay more taxes.

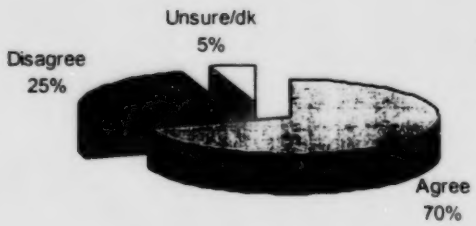
I'm going to read you some statements about the provincial budget and for each I'd like you to tell me if you generally agree or disagree.

Question 21a. The provincial government should have frozen spending on services like health care and education, and should have cut taxes more than they did.



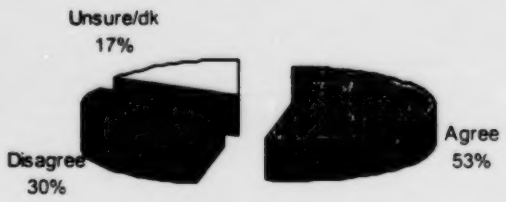
- The majority (69%) of residents disagree the provincial government should have frozen spending on services like health care and education and should have cut taxes more than they did

Question 21b. The provincial government should have left taxes at their current levels and should have spent more on services like health care, education and roads.



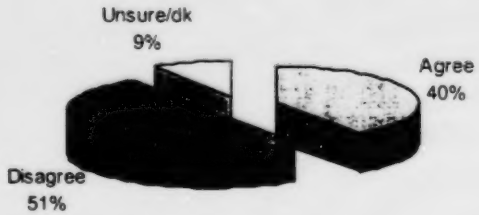
- The majority (70%) of residents agree the provincial government should have left taxes at their current levels and should have spent more on services like health care, education and roads.

Question 21c. The balanced approach taken in the budget - more for health care, an affordable tax cut and less debt over time - was about right given our province's financial position.



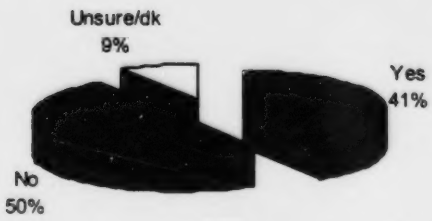
- The majority (53%) of residents agree that the balanced approach taken in the budget was about right given our province's financial position.

Question 22. The provincial government says that steps it took in the recent Budget are necessary in order to ensure that taxes in Saskatchewan are competitive and fair. These include reducing the amount of provincial income tax that all families pay and applying sales tax to additional items - most of which are already taxed in other provinces. Do you agree or disagree that the Budget is taking the right steps to make taxes in Saskatchewan competitive and fair for residents?



- Approximately 40% of Saskatchewan residents agree that the Budget is taking the right steps to make taxes in the province competitive and fair for residents; the majority (51%) disagree.

Question 23. Generally speaking do you think it's fair to pay provincial sales tax on additional goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduced?



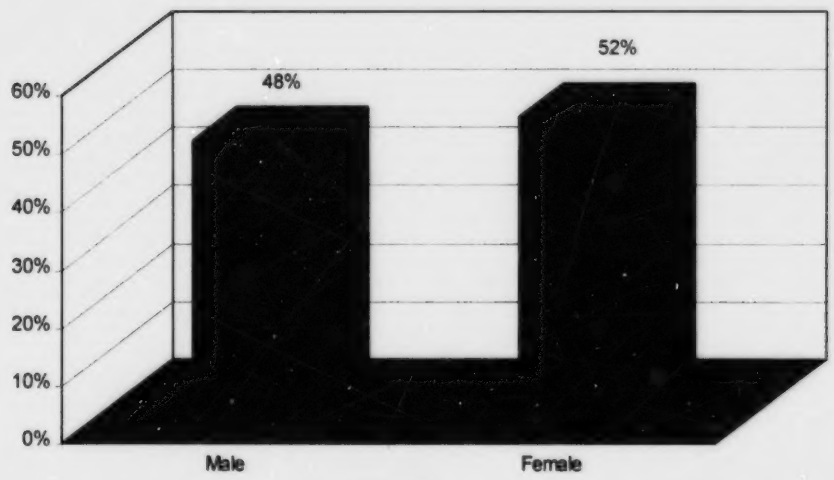
- One half (50%) of Saskatchewan residents do not think it is fair to pay provincial sales tax on additional goods and services if income taxes are substantially reduces; 41% think it is fair.

APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The omnibus public opinion sample frame is constructed to facilitate proportionate representation of various demographic characteristics evident within the province of Saskatchewan. This ensures that opinions of all the various types of residents in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report. The demographic distributions from the survey sample generally parallel the province's actual population distributions, as measured by Statistics Canada census data.

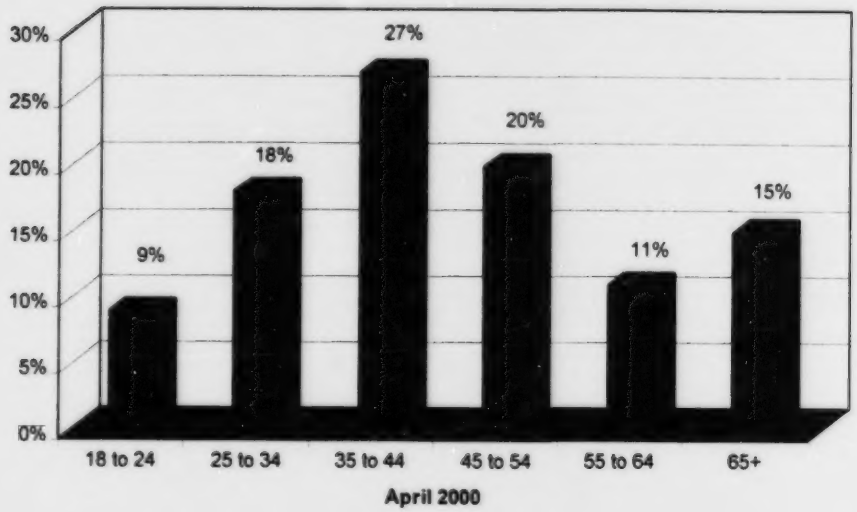
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

Survey sample gender distribution



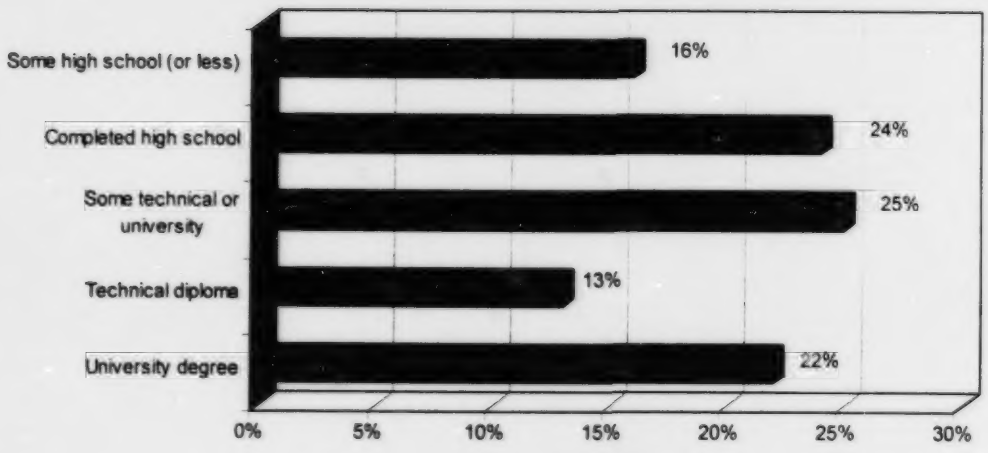
April 2000

Survey sample age distribution



April 2000

Survey sample education distribution



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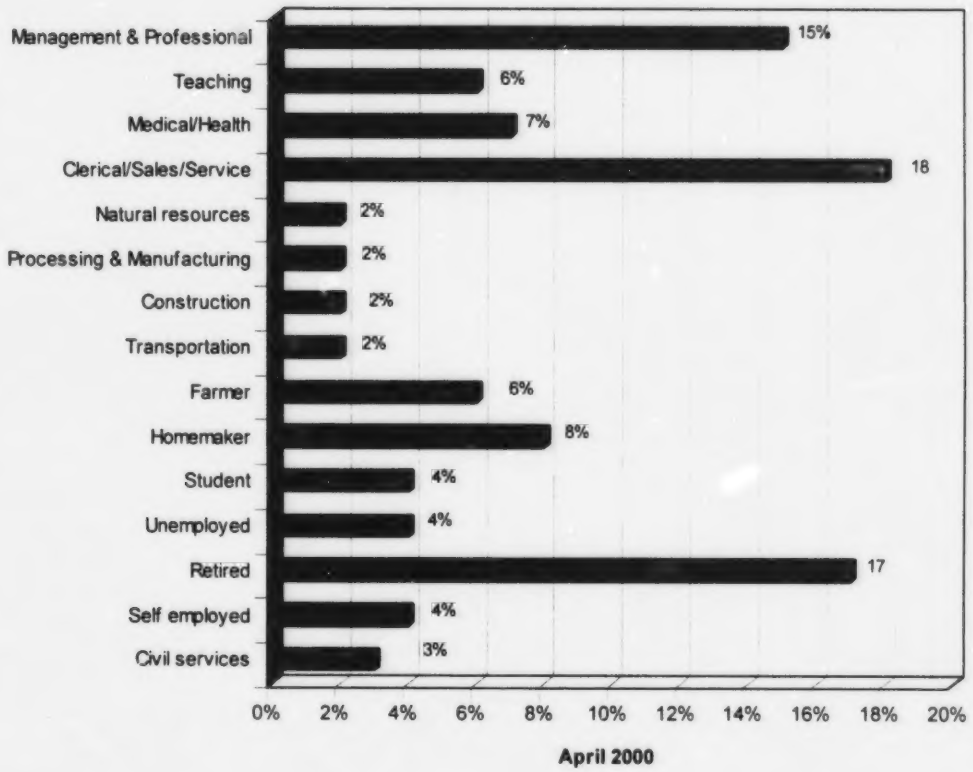
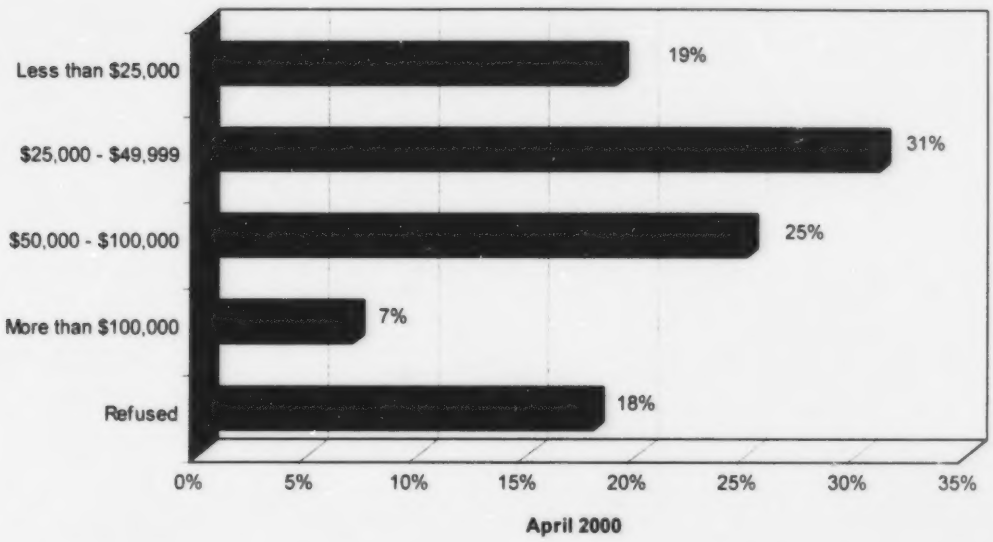
Survey sample occupation distribution



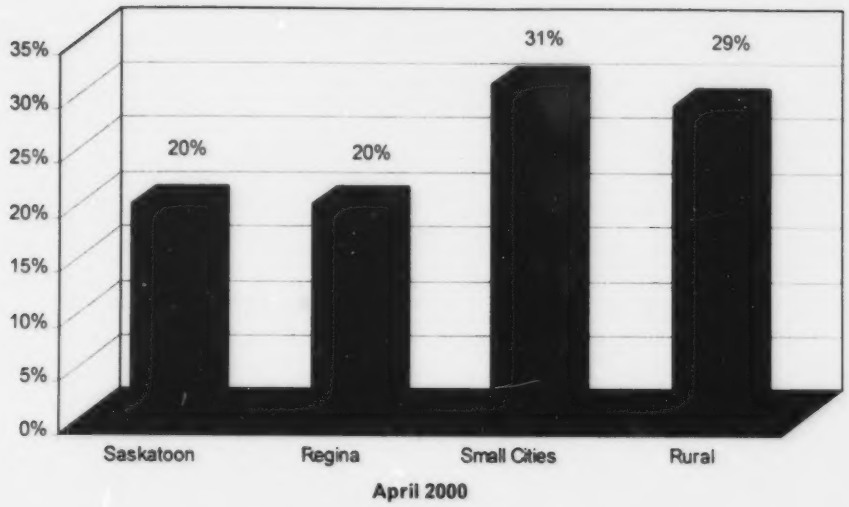
April 2000

Survey sample income distribution



April 2000

Survey sample regional distribution



April 2000

Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Social Services

Date:	**April, 2000**
Supplier:	**Anderson/Fast & Associates, Saskatoon**
Cost:	**$22,150**
Note:	$ 17,150 was paid in fiscal year 1999-00 and $5,000 was paid for in 2000-01

Department of Social Services
Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

Saskatchewan Social Services
2350 Albert Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 4A6

Submitted by:

Anderson/Fast & Associates
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Spring 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- One third of residents indicate the first thing they think of when they hear the words Saskatchewan Social Services is welfare.
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents think the main purpose of welfare is to provide financial support to ensure the necessities of life for all.
- The large majority think everyone has the right to get welfare from the government if they need it.
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents think the number of people receiving welfare has been increasing over the last four years and the plurality think that people receiving welfare have been receiving it for two years or more.
- In general, Saskatchewan residents think welfare rates paid to people in the province are about right or too low.
- The majority of residents approve of introducing programs for low income families to make it easier for them to stay working and avoid falling back on welfare.
- The majority of residents are supportive of targeted job creation specifically for those who are on welfare.
- The majority consider people with autism, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), clinical personality disorder and AIDS as people with disabilities.
- The large majority of residents think a person with a disability should get help from the government to get a job or continue working.
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents say the best way to deal with young persons who commit offences/young offenders depends on the case.
- More than one third of residents think the main the purpose of young offender laws are to give kids a second chance.
- More than three quarters think there are more teenagers committing crimes today than when they were teenagers.
- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents agree that youth who commit less serious crimes should be treated differently from those who commit serious crimes of violence. Two thirds think the best way to deal with youth who commit less serious crimes is deal with them outside the court system where they have no criminal record.
- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents think child poverty is an issue in the province.

METHODOLOGY

Anderson/Fast & Associates was retained by the Department of Social Services to conduct a public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The Department of Social Services Public Opinion Survey contains questions designed to gather public opinion regarding:

- important social issues in Saskatchewan;
- income security;
- people with disabilities;
- young offenders; and
- children's issues.

The questions for the survey were designed by the Department of Social Services. Anderson/Fast reviewed the questions, offered recommendations and assembled the survey into an interview format. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 800 households throughout Saskatchewan. To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

Seven hundred and seventeen residents of the province were interviewed between March 2 and March 8, 2000. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Anderson/Fast's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

An additional 100 interviews were conducted by the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) with Aboriginal residents of the province. SIIT was able to conduct surveys in respondents' first languages: English, Cree or Dene. This ensures that residents were not excluded from the sample because of language barriers. All surveys conducted by SIIT were translated and recorded in English and then given to Anderson/Fast for coding, data entry and analysis. One hundred surveys were conducted between April 10 and April 20, 2000.

Aboriginal residents were over-sampled relative to their actual population in order to obtain a sample size that would more accurately represent the opinions and perceptions held by this segment when examined alone. The sample of 100 Aboriginal residents yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95% with a margin of error of plus or minus 9.8 percentage points.

In order to obtain a proportionate representation of Aboriginal residents in the overall province-wide sample, 33 Aboriginal resident surveys were randomly selected and blended with the sample of 717 non-Aboriginal surveys to give a total sample size of 750.

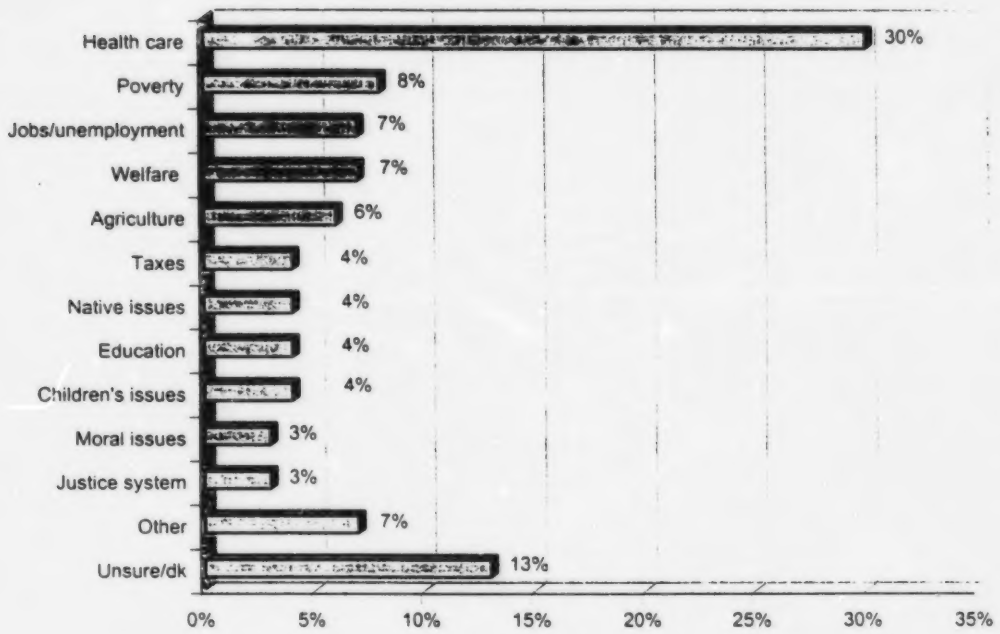
Completed interviews were processed by Anderson/Fast. Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure the accuracy of the data. The Department of Social Services survey sample size of 750 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.6 percentage points: reliable results with low variability.

Anderson/Fast designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. We also conducted statistical tests on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

1.0 General Issues

Most important social issue

Question. In your opinion, what is the most important social issue in Saskatchewan today?

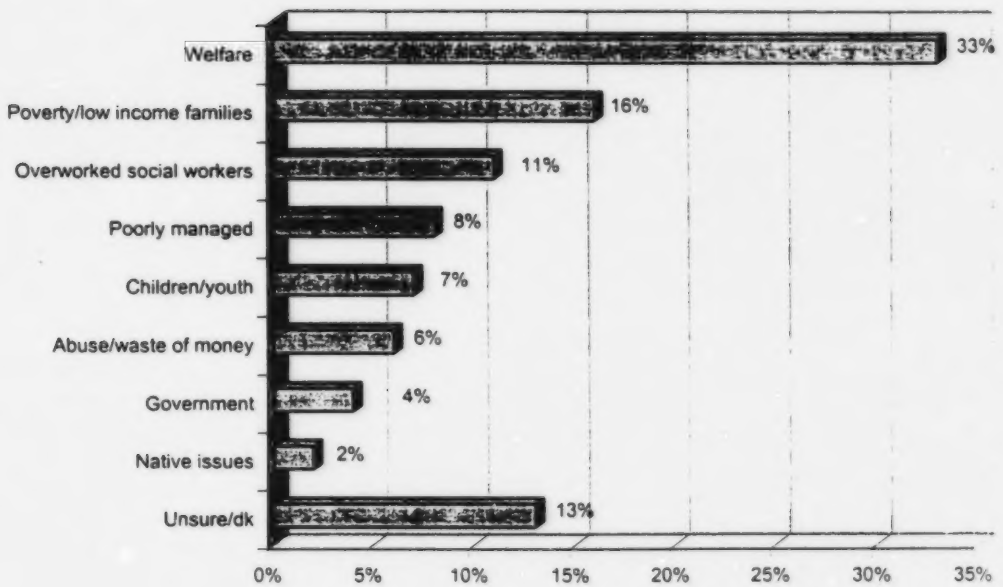


- According to 30% of residents the most important social issue in Saskatchewan today is health care. Approximately 8% say poverty, 7% think jobs and unemployment, another 7% indicate welfare and 6% think agriculture is the most important social issue in Saskatchewan today.

- Included among 'other' mentioned by 7% of respondents are discrimination and racism (2%), young offenders (1%) and fuel prices (1%).

Saskatchewan Social Services

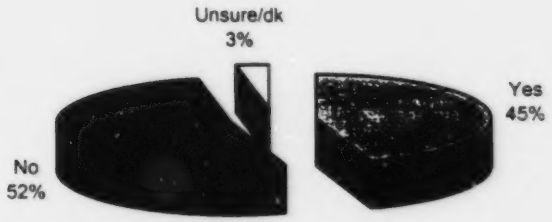
Question. When you hear the words Saskatchewan Social Services, what is the first thing you think of?



- For one third of residents (33%) the first thing they think of when they hear the words Saskatchewan Social Services is welfare. Approximately 16% indicate the first thing they think of is poverty and low income families, 11% mention overworked social workers, 8% think Social Services is poorly managed and 7% think about children and youth.

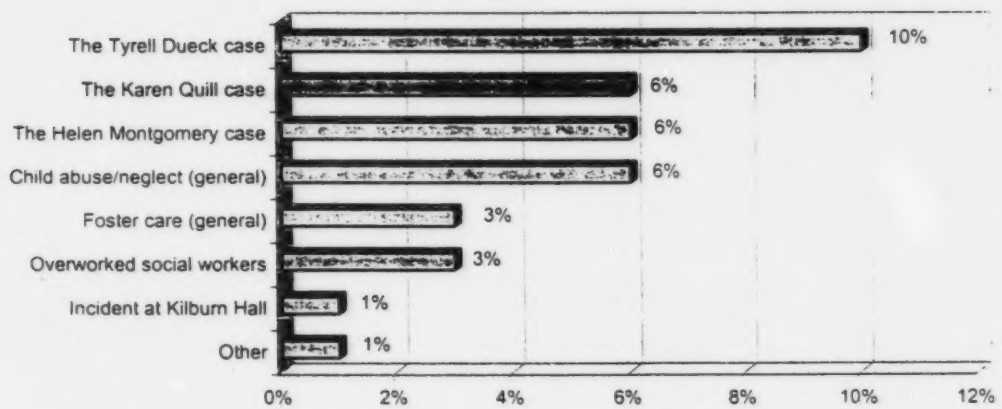
Specific cases

Question. Do you recall hearing, reading or seeing anything about specific cases dealing with the department of Social Services?



- Slightly less than one half (45%) of residents recall hearing, reading or seeing something about specific cases dealing with the Department of Social Services.

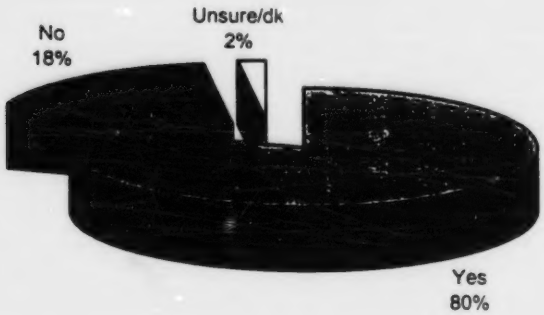
Question. Do you recall what is it was?



- Approximately 10% of residents recall the Tyrell Dueck case, 6% mention the Karen Quill case, 6% recall the Helen Montgomery case, and another 6% identify child abuse and neglect in general.

Social workers

Question. Have you heard the claim that social workers are overworked?



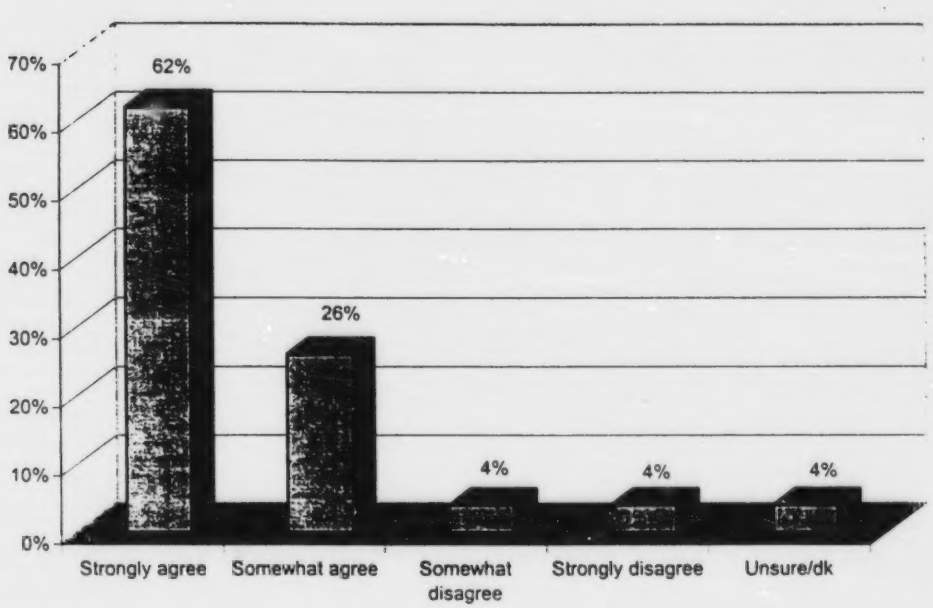
- More than three quarters (80%) of Saskatchewan residents have heard the claim that social workers are overworked.

Question. Do you agree with the claim that social workers are overworked?

- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (59%) agree with the claim that social workers are overworked.

Fraud in the welfare system

Question. Would you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that there is a problem with fraud in the welfare system?



- The large majority of residents (88%) agree there is a problem with fraud in the welfare system; 62% strongly agree.

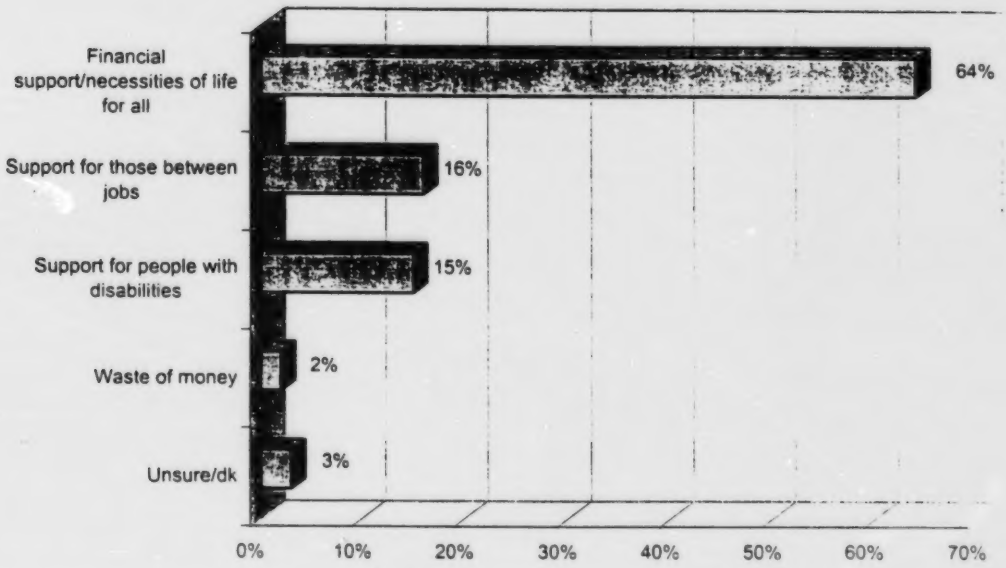
Question. Would you say the welfare system is defrauded by?

- Almost one quarter (24%) of residents think the welfare system is defrauded by more than 20 percent of those who use it. Approximately 20% think the welfare system is defrauded by 6 to 10 percent and 17% think the system is defrauded by 11 to 20 percent of those who use it.

2.0 INCOME SECURITY

Main purpose of income security

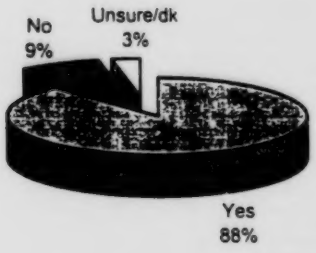
Question. What do you think the main purpose of welfare is?



- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (64%) think the main purpose of welfare is to provide financial support to ensure the necessities of life for all, 16% think it is to support individuals who are between jobs and 15% think the purpose of welfare is to support people with disabilities.

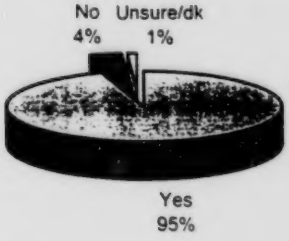
Is income security a basic right

Question. Do you think everyone has the right to get welfare from the government if they need it?



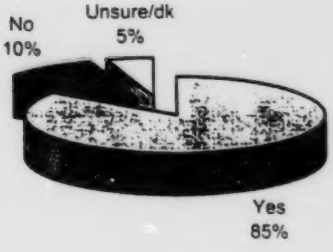
- The large majority (88%) of residents think everyone has the right to get welfare from the government if they need it.

Question. Do you think people receiving welfare have an obligation to try to get work or training?



- The large majority (95%) think people receiving welfare have an obligation to try to get work or training.

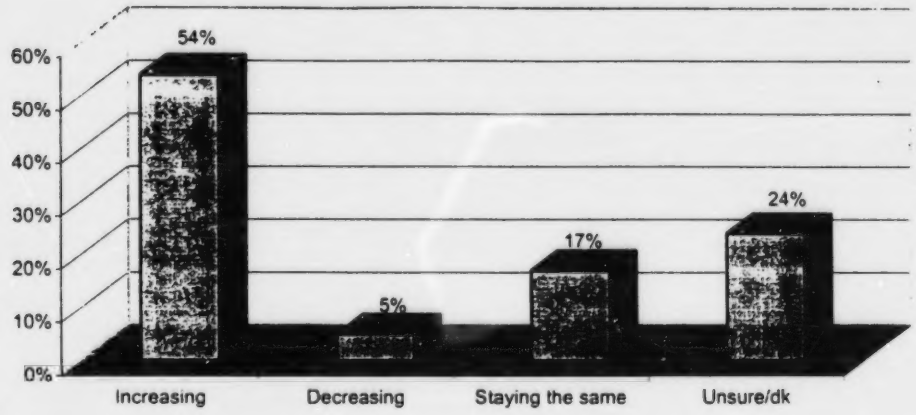
Question. In order to be eligible to receive welfare should single employable people first be made to sign a contract agreeing to look for work or upgrade their education after a certain period of time?



- The majority of residents (85%) think single employable people should be made to sign a contract agreeing to look for work or upgrade their education after a certain period of time in order to be eligible to receive welfare.

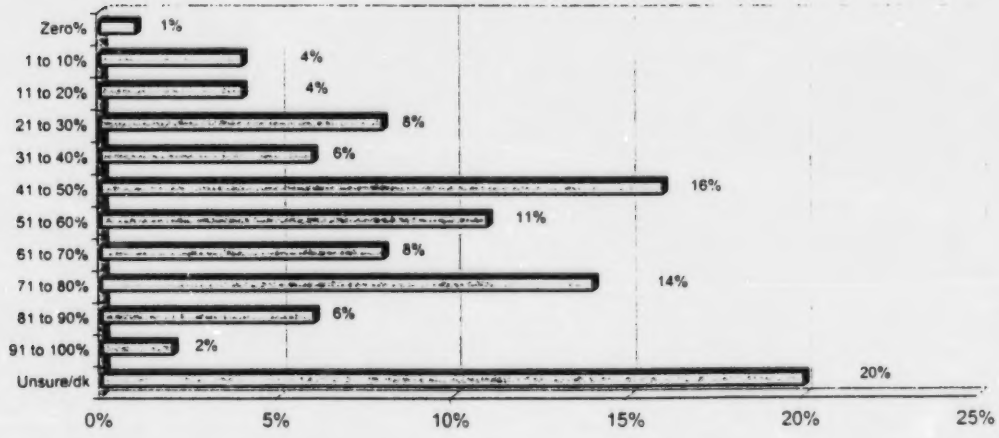
Number of people on income security

Question. On the whole, would you say the number of people in Saskatchewan receiving welfare has been increasing, decreasing or staying the same over the past four years?



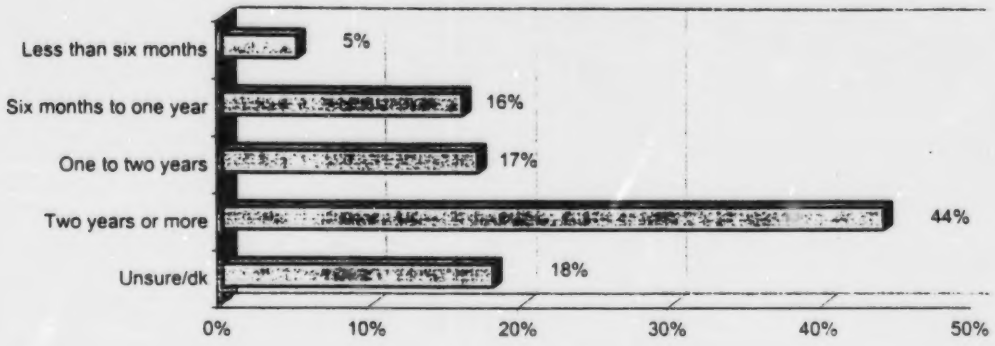
- The majority (54%) think the number of people receiving welfare has been increasing over the past four years.

Question. People receiving welfare are classified by whether or not they are able to work. Some recipients have a health related, family or social reason that prevents them from working. Of all the people receiving welfare in Saskatchewan, what percentage do you think are actually able to work?



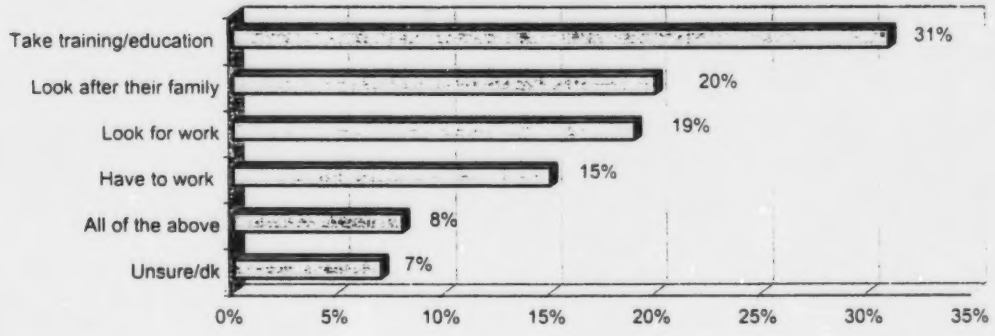
- Approximately 41% of residents think of all the people receiving welfare in Saskatchewan that more than one half of them are actually able to work; 39% think less than one half are actually able to work.

Question. Of those receiving welfare that are actually able to work, how long would you think they typically have been receiving welfare?



- A plurality of residents (44%) think people receiving welfare have been receiving welfare for two years or more.

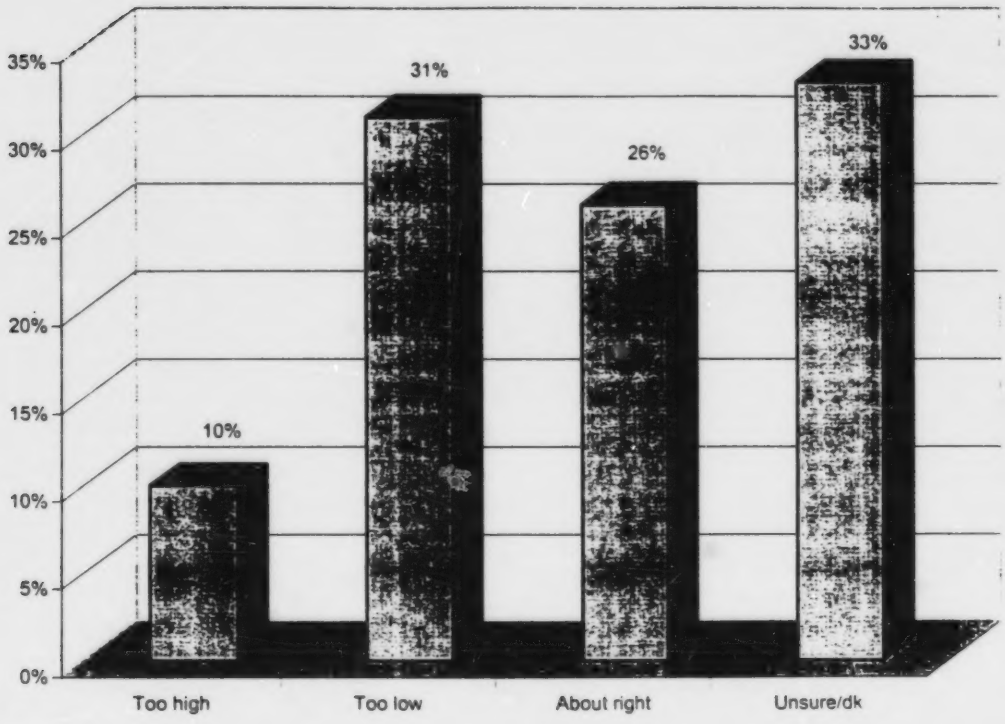
Question. When single people, who are able to work are on welfare, they are actually on welfare for an average of five or six months. How do you think they should be spending their time while on welfare? Do you think they should...?



- Almost one third (31%) think single people, who are able to work and on welfare, should be taking training or education while they are on welfare, 20% think they should look after their family, if they have a family and 19% think they should look for work.

Income security rates

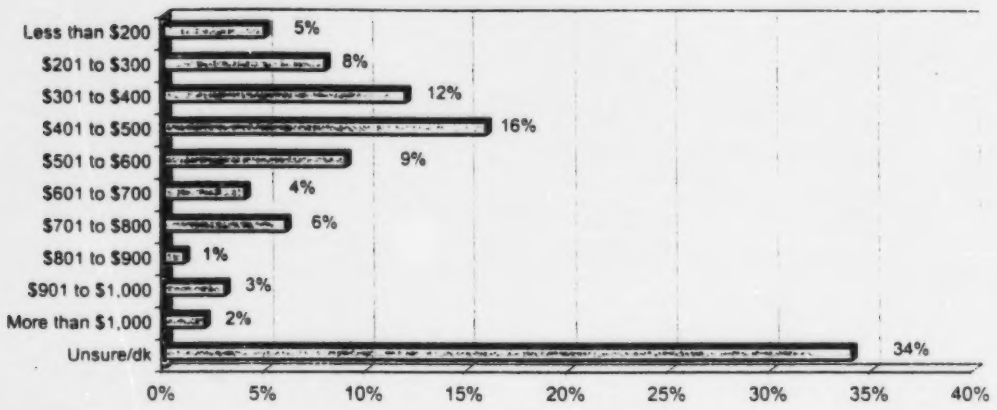
Question. In general, would you say the welfare rates paid to people in the province are too high, too low or about right?



- Approximately 31% of Saskatchewan residents think the welfare rates paid to people in the province are too low; 26% think the rates are about right. A plurality - one third - are unsure if the welfare rates paid to people in the province are too high, too low or about right.

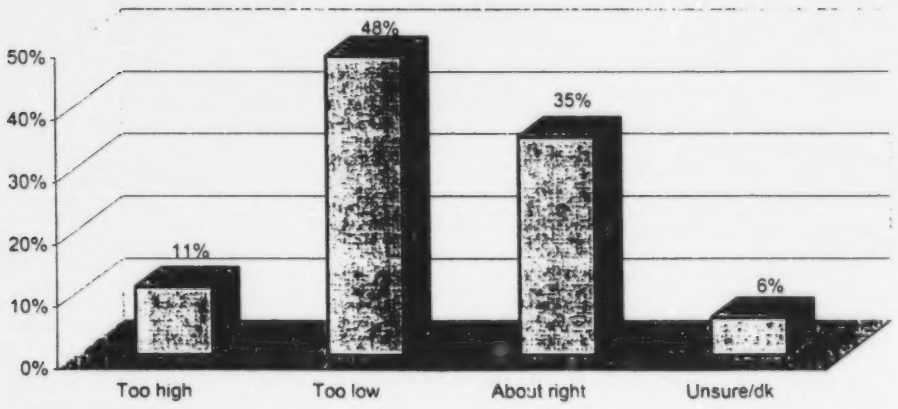
Single person with no children

Question. How much money do you think a single person who is able to work and doesn't have children receives from welfare in a month?



- One quarter (25%) of Saskatchewan residents think a single person who is able to work and doesn't have children receives less than $400 a month from welfare; 41% think they receive more than $400 a month from welfare. A plurality (34%) are unsure what a single person who is able to work receives from welfare in a month.

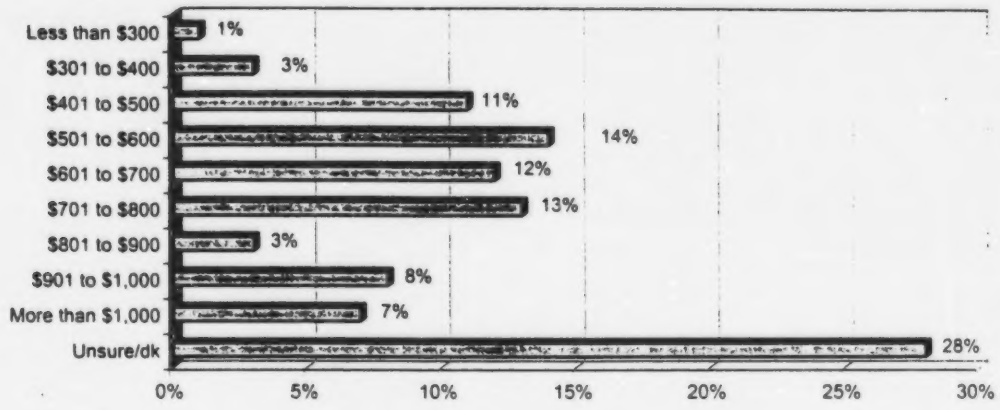
Question. A single person who is able to work and doesn't have children receives on average $357 a month from welfare. Do you think the rates for a single employable person without children are too high, too low, or just about right?



- A plurality (48%) think the welfare rates for a single employable person without children are too low, while 35% think they are about right.

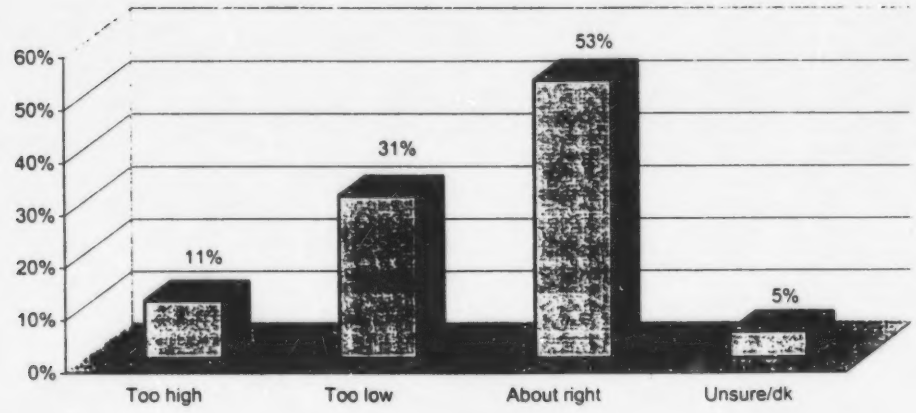
Single mother with two children

Question. How much money do you think a single mother with two children receives from welfare in a month?



- Almost one third (31%) of Saskatchewan residents think a single mother with two children receives more than $700 a month from welfare; 41% think a single mother with two children receives less than $700 a month. A plurality (28%) are unsure what a single mother with two children receives from welfare in a month.

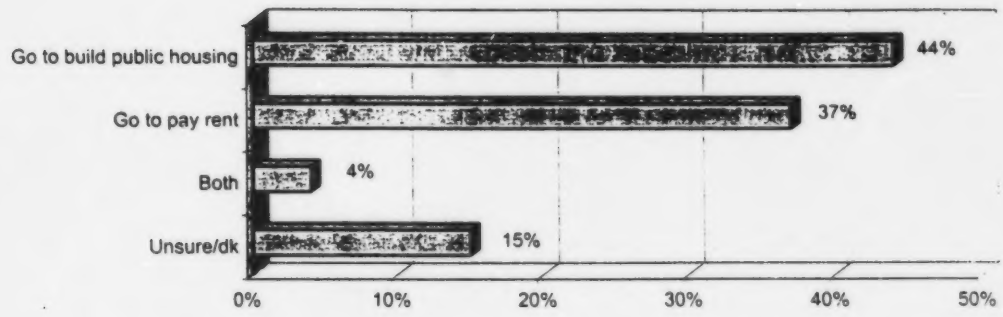
Question. A single mother with two children receives about $705 a month from welfare, in addition to child benefits of approximately $421. Do you think the rates for a single mother with two children are too high, too low or about right?



- The majority of residents (53%) think the welfare rates paid to a single mother with two children are about right, while 31% think the rates are too low.

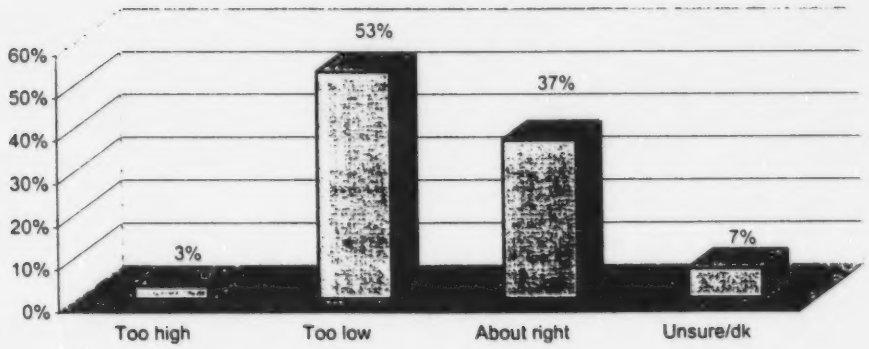
Housing

Question. Currently, money is provided to people on welfare to cover basic costs of living and housing. Do you think the housing portion of this money should go to pay rent or should it go toward building affordable public housing instead?



- Approximately 44% of Saskatchewan residents think the housing portion of money provided to people on welfare should go to build public housing, while 37% think it should go to pay rent.

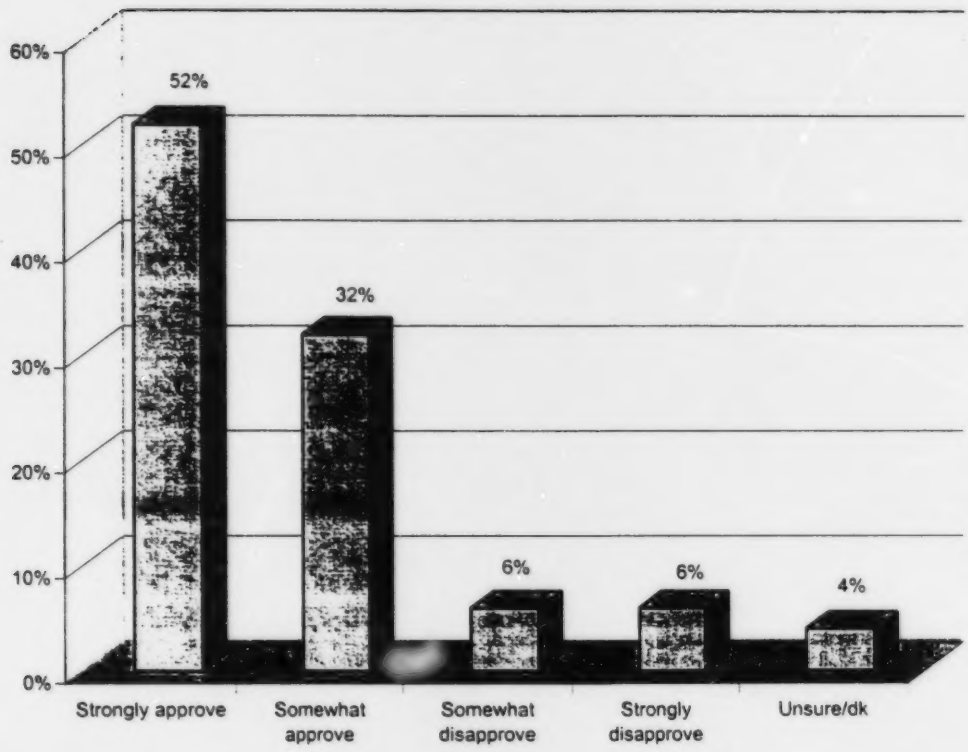
Question. A single person who is able to work and doesn't have children receives approximately $210 a month for housing. A family with two children receives up to $410 a month for housing. Do you think the amounts that go toward housing are too high, too low or about right?



- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (53%) think the amounts that go toward housing are too low; 37% think they are about right.

Health benefits for low income working families

Question. Last year, the government introduced programs for low income families, to make it easier for them to stay working and avoid falling back onto welfare. For example, low income working families now receive health benefits, such as dental care for their children, that they would receive on assistance but not if they were working in a low income job. Do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of this approach?



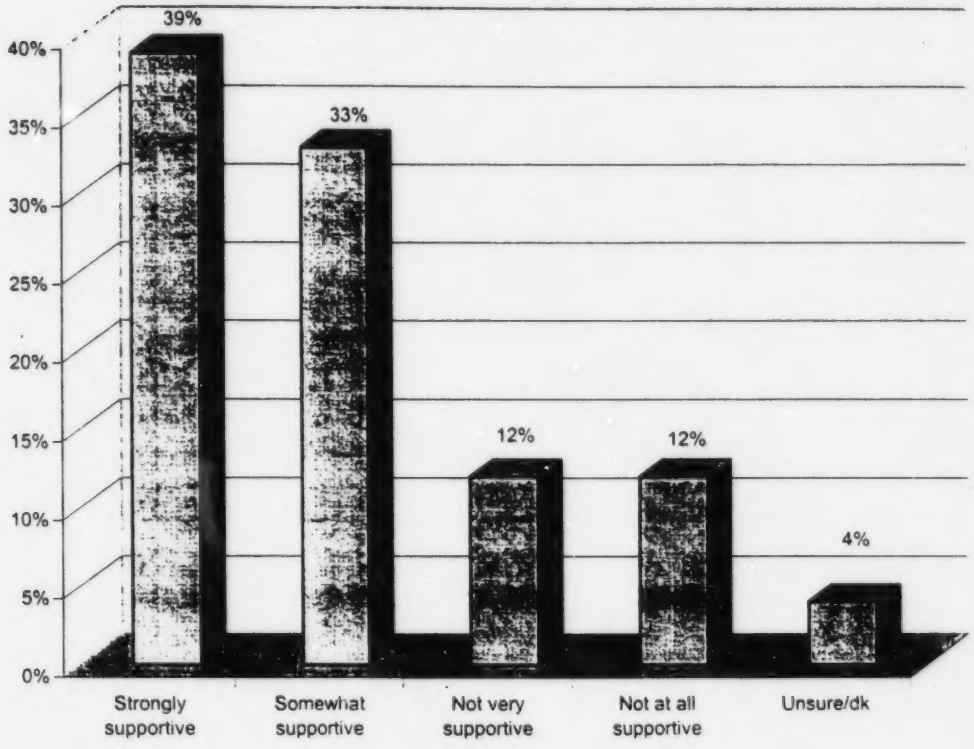
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (84%) approve of this approach to make it easier for low income families to stay working and avoid falling back on welfare; 52% strongly approve.

Question. Why do you not approve of this approach?

- Less than one in ten (4%) residents do not approve of this approach because they think it is unfair to provide health benefits to low income working families and not to other working families.

Targeted job creation

Question. Some people have suggested that governments should do more to create jobs specifically for those who are on welfare which may add administration costs. Taking into account increased administration costs, how supportive are you of the idea of targeted job creation for those on welfare?

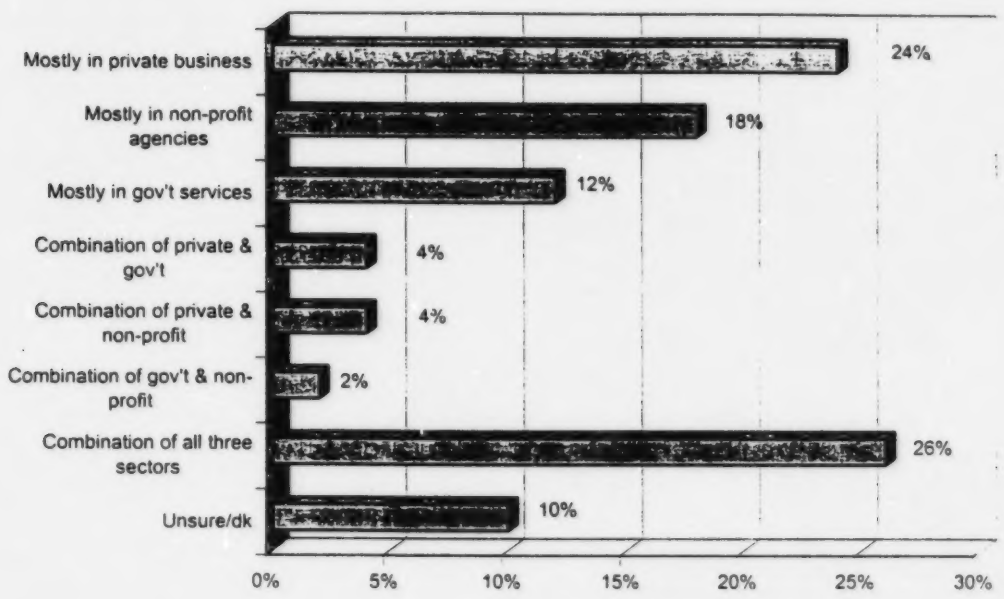


- The majority (72%) of Saskatchewan residents are supportive of the idea of targeted job creation for those on welfare.

Question. Why are you opposed to the idea?

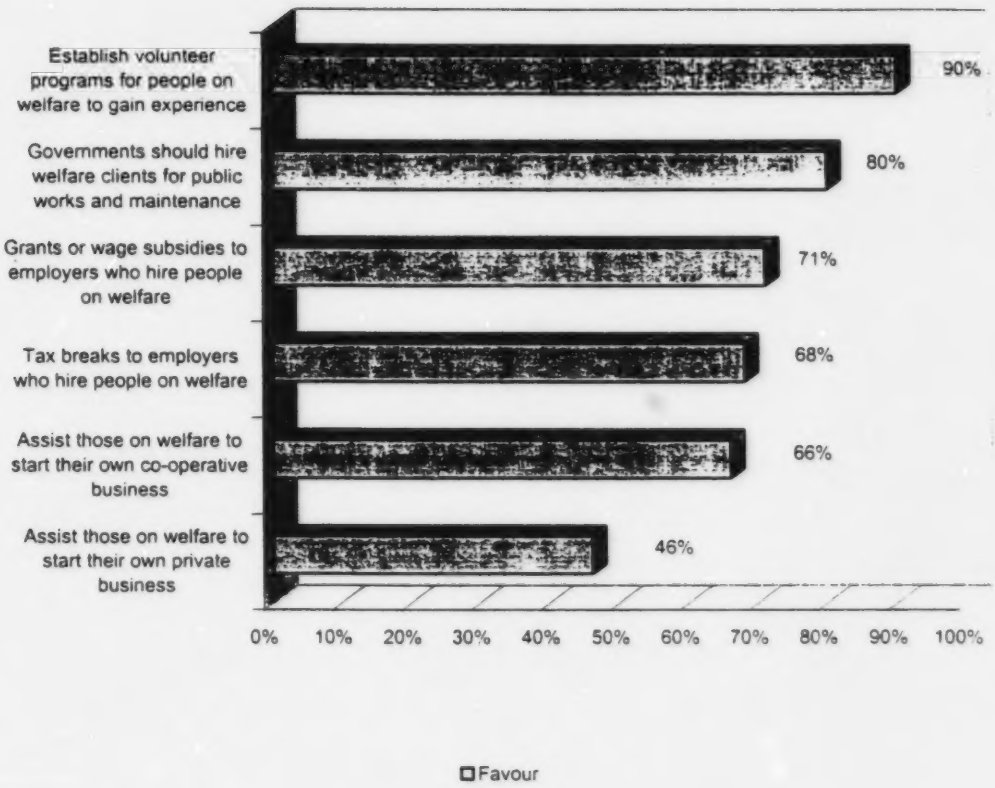
- Less than one in ten (8%) are opposed to the idea because they think it does not give people motivation to look for work on their own, 7% think there is too much administration already and 4% think this program would be unfair to other people who are looking for work.

Question. If governments were to create jobs for welfare clients, where should most of these jobs be created?



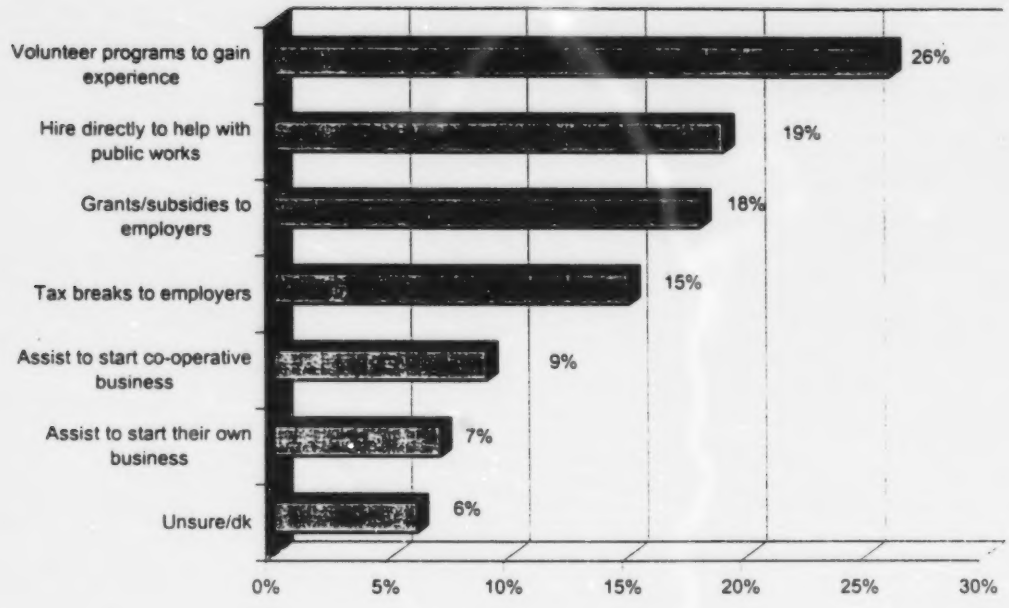
- Almost one quarter of residents (24%) think if governments were to create jobs for welfare clients the jobs should be created mostly in private business, 18% think non-profit agencies, 12% think government services and 26% think jobs should be created in a combination of all three sectors.

Question. There are a number of ways government could go about creating jobs for welfare recipients. I'm going to read a few of these suggestions. For each one, I'd like you to tell me whether you'd favour or oppose such an approach.



- The large majority of residents favour establishing volunteer programs for people on welfare to gain experience (90%) and governments hiring welfare clients directly to help out with public works construction and maintenance (80%).
- The majority favour offering grants or wage subsidies to employers who hire people on welfare (71%), offering tax breaks to employers who hire people on welfare (68%) and assisting those on welfare to start their own co-operative business (66%).

Question. Which one of these approaches would you like to see government pursue most?

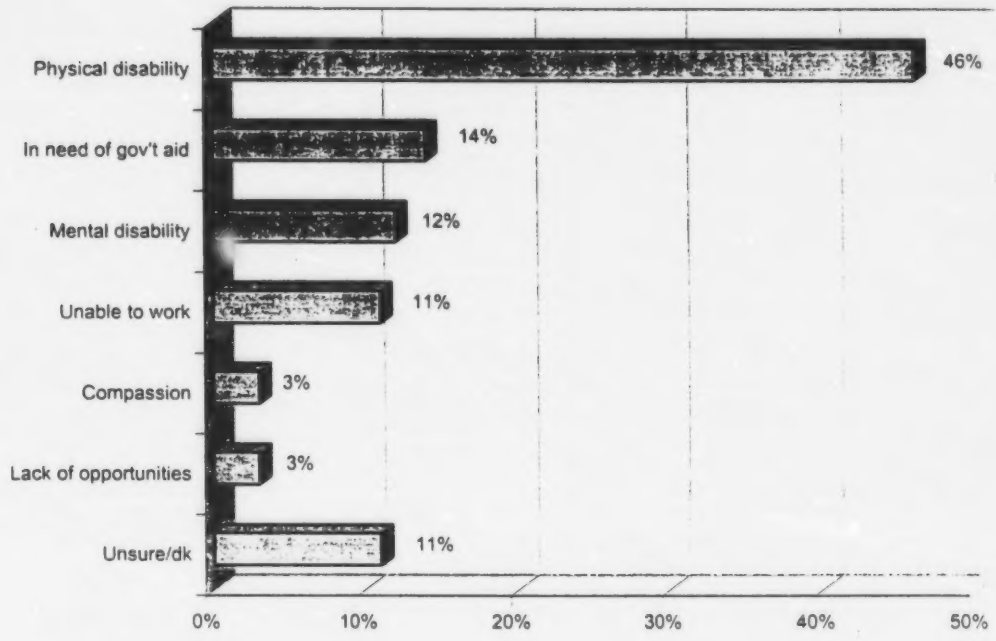


- Of these approaches, more than one quarter (26%) of Saskatchewan residents would like to see the government pursue establishing volunteer programs for people on welfare to gain experience the most. Approximately 19% would like to see the government hire welfare clients directly to help with public works construction and maintenence, 18% think offering grants and subsidies to employers who hire people on welfare and 15% would like the government to pursue offering tax breaks to employers who hire people on welfare.

3.0 People With Disabilities

Image of people with disabilities

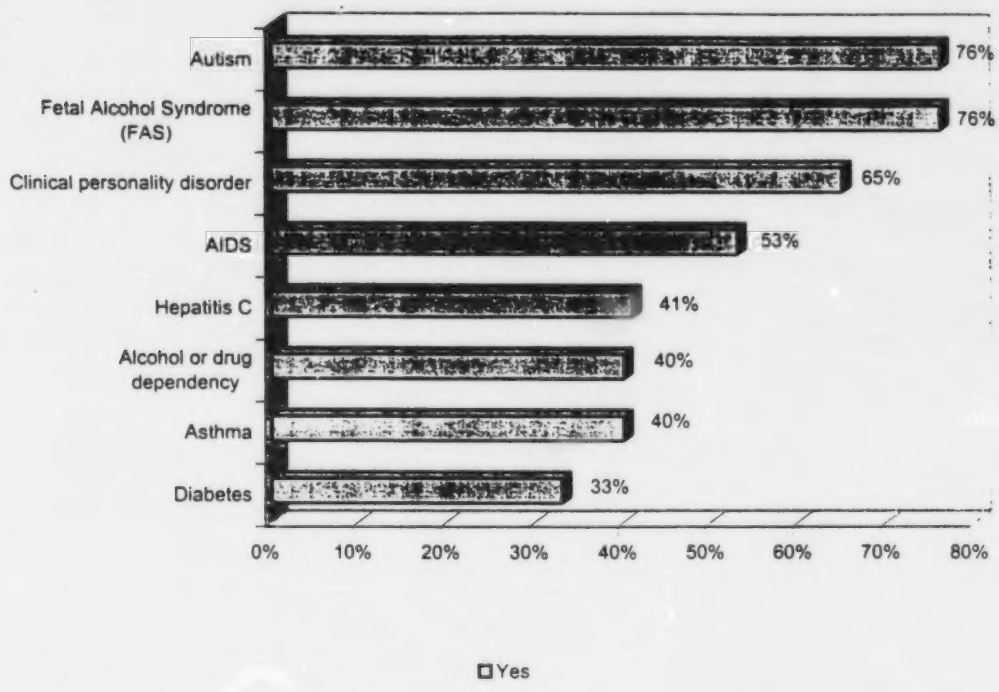
Question. When you think of a person with a disability what comes to mind?



- When asked what they think of when they think of a person with a disability almost one half (46%) of Saskatchewan residents think of a person with a physical disability.

Physical and mental conditions

Question. I'm going to read a list of physical and mental conditions. I'd like you to tell me if you would consider a person with one of these conditions to be a person with a disability.



- The majority of residents consider people with autism (76%), Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) (76%), clinical personality disorder (65%) and AIDS (53%) as people with disabilities.

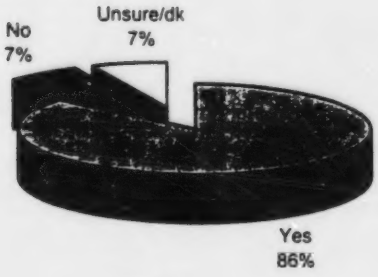
Number of people with disabilities

Question. Statistics Canada defines a person as having a disability if he or she is limited in the kind or amount of activity they can do because of a long-term physical or mental condition or health problem. Using this definition, how large a percentage of the population of Saskatchewan do you think are people with disabilities?

- Slightly less than one half (48%) of residents think 10% or less of the population of Saskatchewan are people with disabilities, while 42% think more than 10% are people with disabilities.

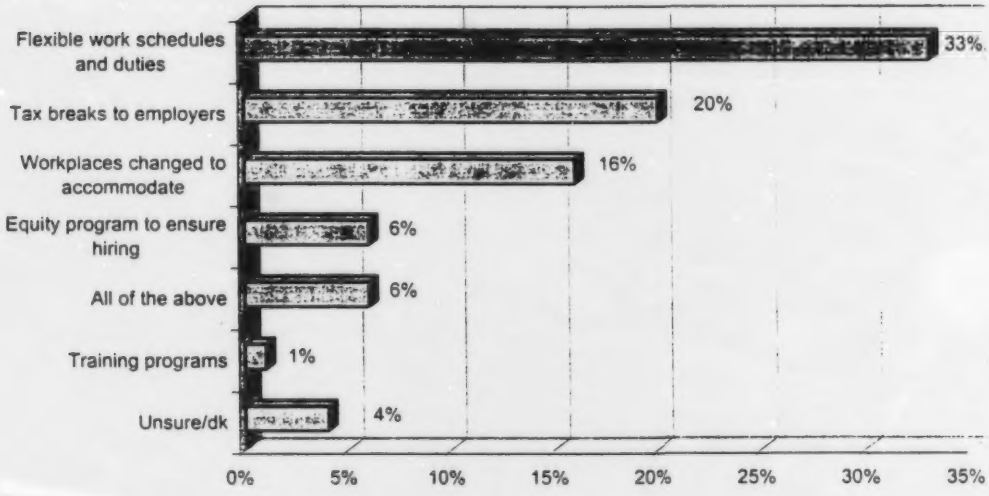
Help for people with disabilities

Question. Do you think a person with a disability should get help from the government to get a job or continue working?



- The large majority (86%) think a person with a disability should get help from the government to get a job or continue working.

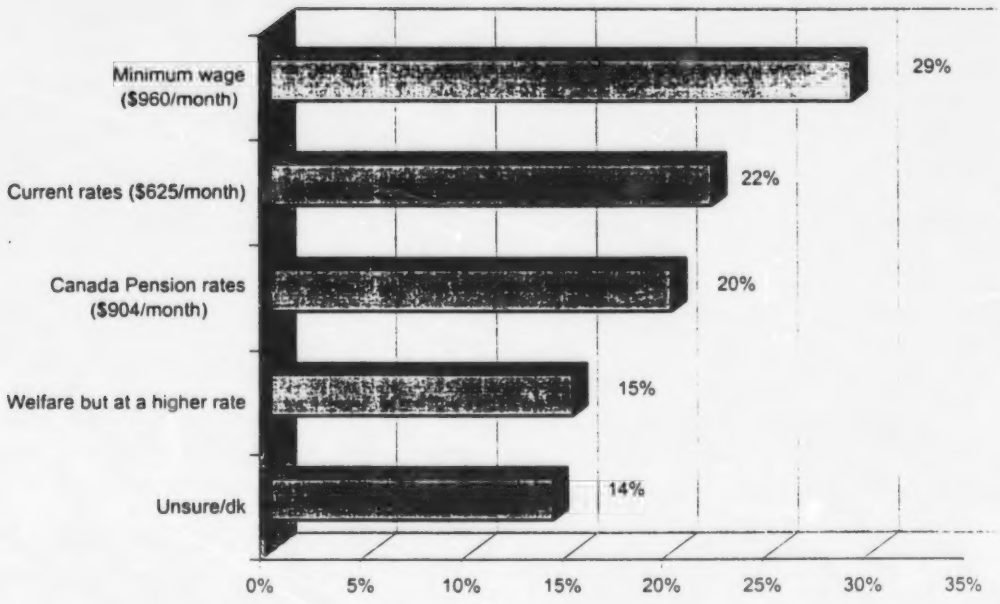
Question. What kind of help do you think they should get?



- One third (33%) of Saskatchewan residents think a person with a disability should get flexible work schedules and duties. Approximately 20% think the government should provide tax breaks to employers who hire people with disabilities and 16% think workplaces should be changed to accommodate the disability.

Rates for people with disabilities who cannot work

Question. A person with a disability who cannot work currently receives welfare from the government, at slightly higher than the rates mentioned earlier. Do you think a single person with a disability who has no children should receive financial support equal to:



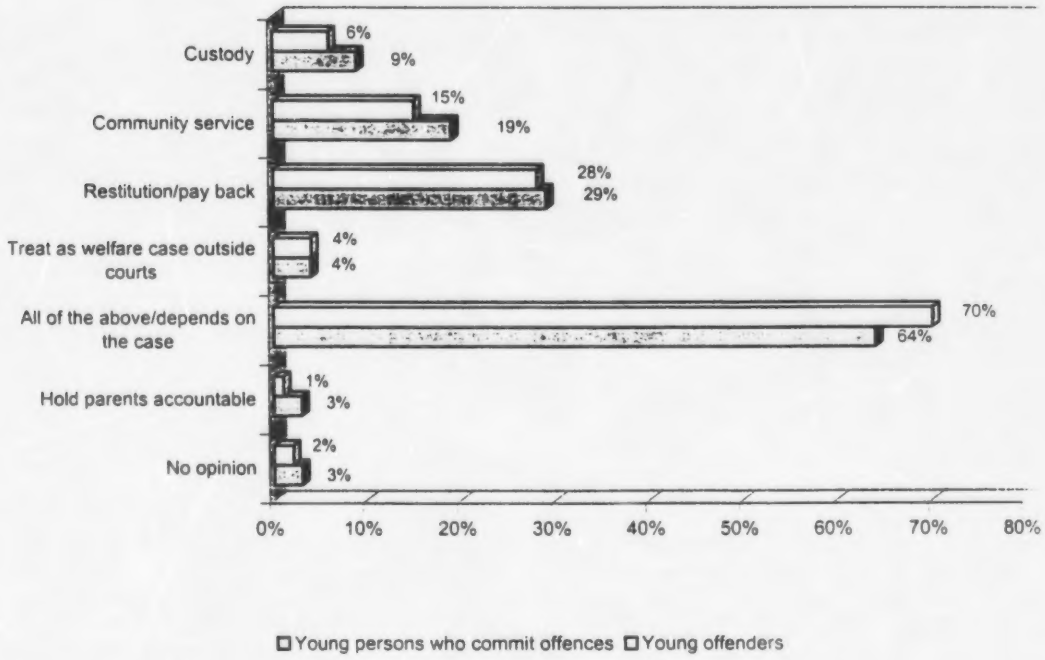
- More than one quarter (29%) of Saskatchewan residents think a single person with a disability who cannot work should receive financial support equal to minimum wage of $960 a month. Approximately 22% think they should receive support equal to their current rates of $625 a month and 20% think they should receive financial support equal to Canada Pension rates of $904 a month.

4.0 YOUNG OFFENDERS

Dealing with young offenders

This question was asked two ways using different terminology: 1) young persons who commit offences and 2) young offenders. This was done to determine if there is a difference in perception using different terminology to describe youth who commit offences. Generally, there are no statistically significant differences in the changing of the terminology used in the question.

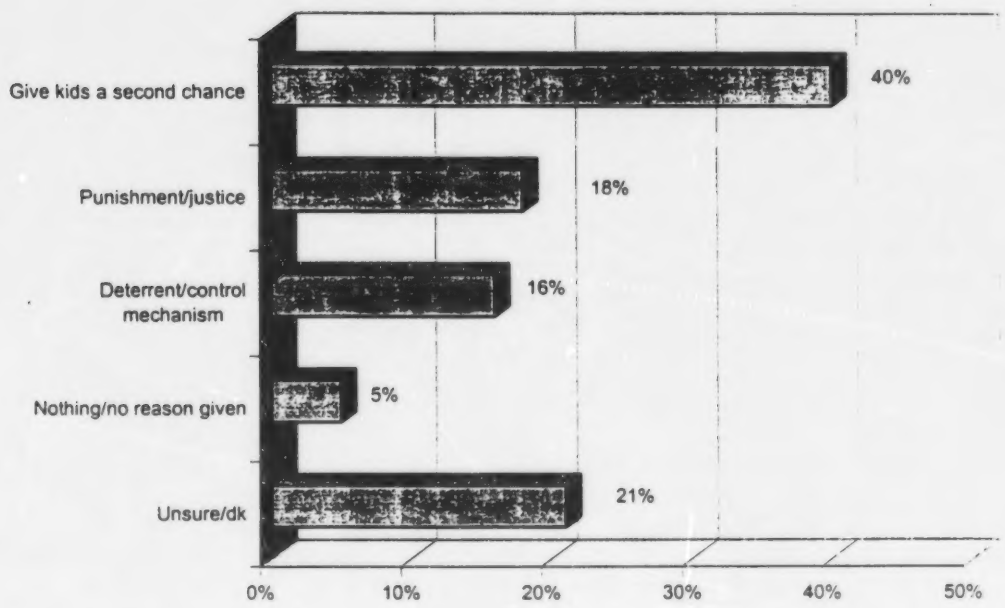
Question. There has been some discussion lately about how best to deal with young persons who commit offences/young offenders. Which one of the following approaches do you personally believe would best help? Should it be through...?



- There is very little difference in the publics' perception in how best to deal with young persons who commit offences and young offenders. The majority of residents say the best way to deal with young persons who commit offences or young offenders depends on the case by using custody, community service and restitution.

Young offender laws

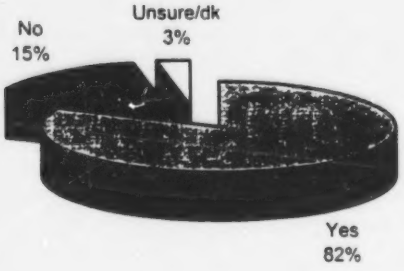
Question. What do you think the main purpose of young offender laws are?



- Approximately 40% of Saskatchewan residents think the main purpose of young offender laws are to give kids a second chance. About 18% think the laws are to punish young offenders and 16% think young offender laws serve as a deterrent to committing offences.

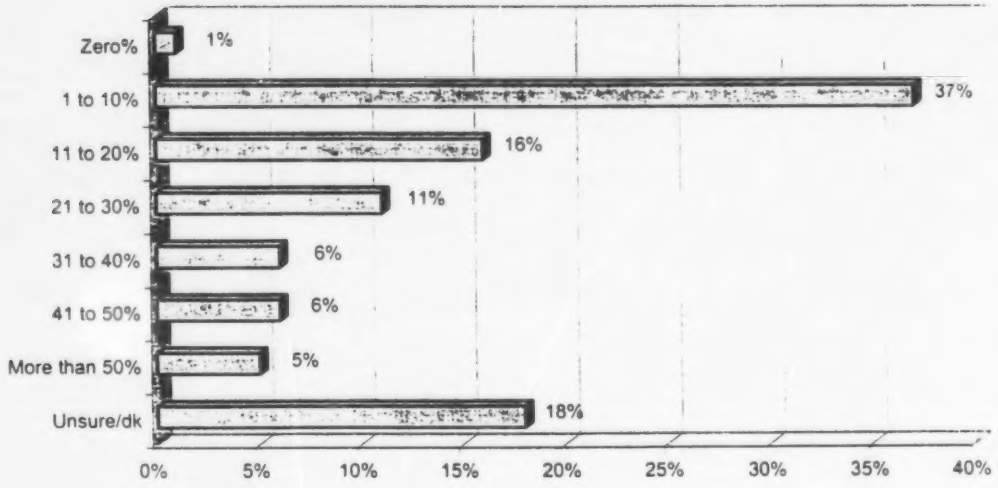
Number of young offenders

Question. Thinking back to your own youth, do you believe there are more teenagers committing crimes today than when you were a teenager?



- More than three quarters of residents (82%) think there are more teenagers committing crimes today than when they were teenagers.

Question. What percentage of Saskatchewan youth would you say are young offenders?



- More than one third (38%) think less than 10 percent of Saskatchewan youth are young offenders, 27% think between 11 and 30 percent are young offenders and 17% think more than 30 percent of Saskatchewan youth are young offenders.

Victim of young offenders

Question. Have you been the victim of an offence committed by a youth?

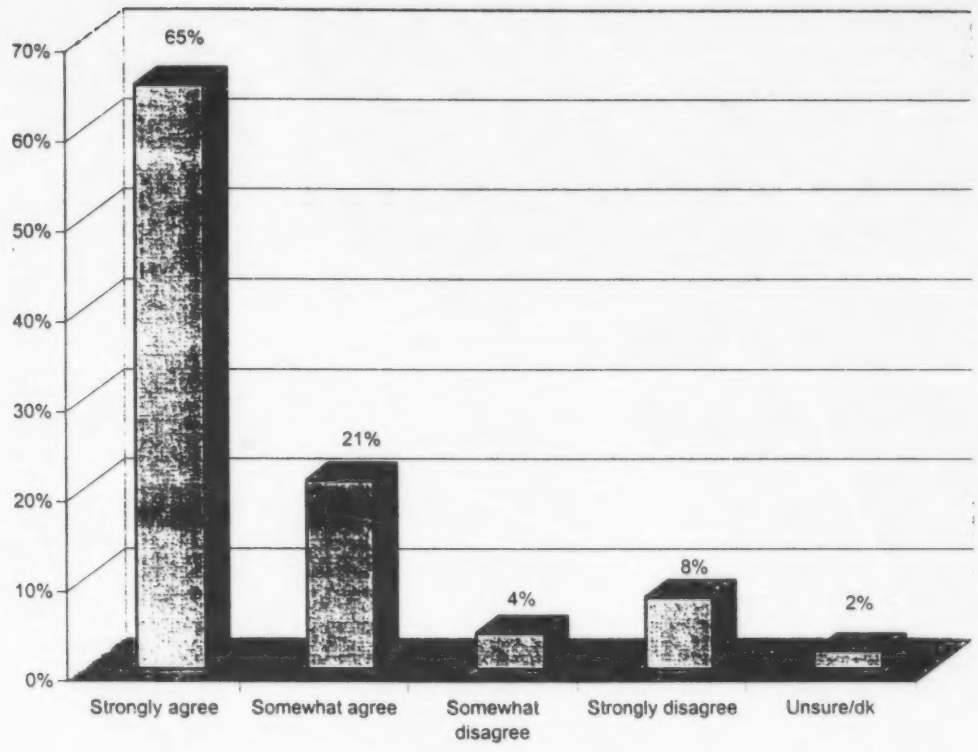
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (65%) have not been the victim of an offence committed by a youth; 36% have. This can include any offence from personal assault to property crimes such as vandalism.

Question. Did you report that offence to the police?

- More than one quarter (29%) of Saskatchewan residents who have been the victim of a crime committed by a youth have reported the offence to the police.

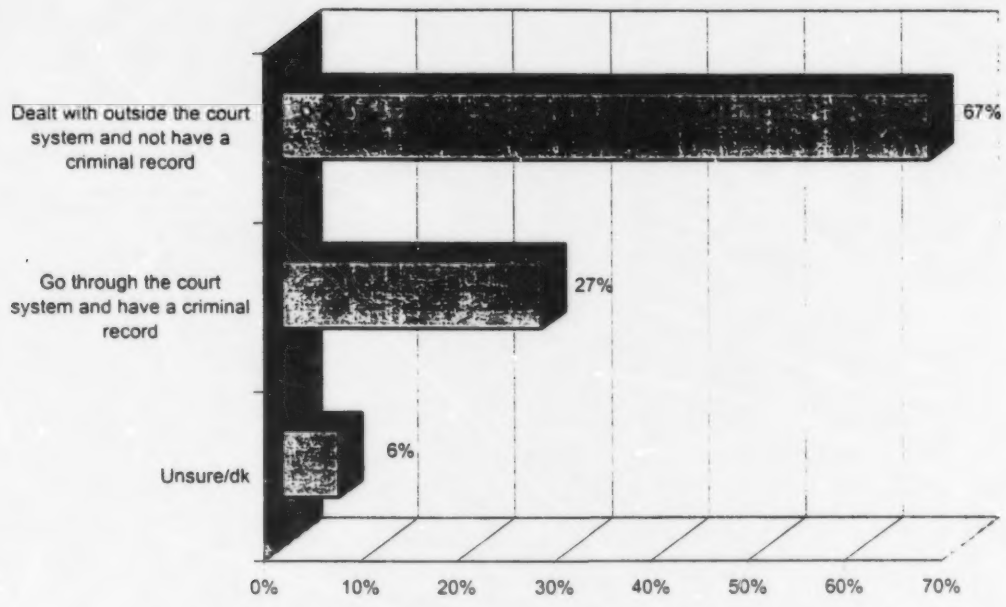
Less serious crimes

Question. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that youth who commit less serious crimes should be treated differently from youth who commit serious crimes of violence?



- The large majority (86%) of residents agree that youth who commit less serious crimes should be treated differently from those who commit serious crimes of violence; 65% strongly agree.

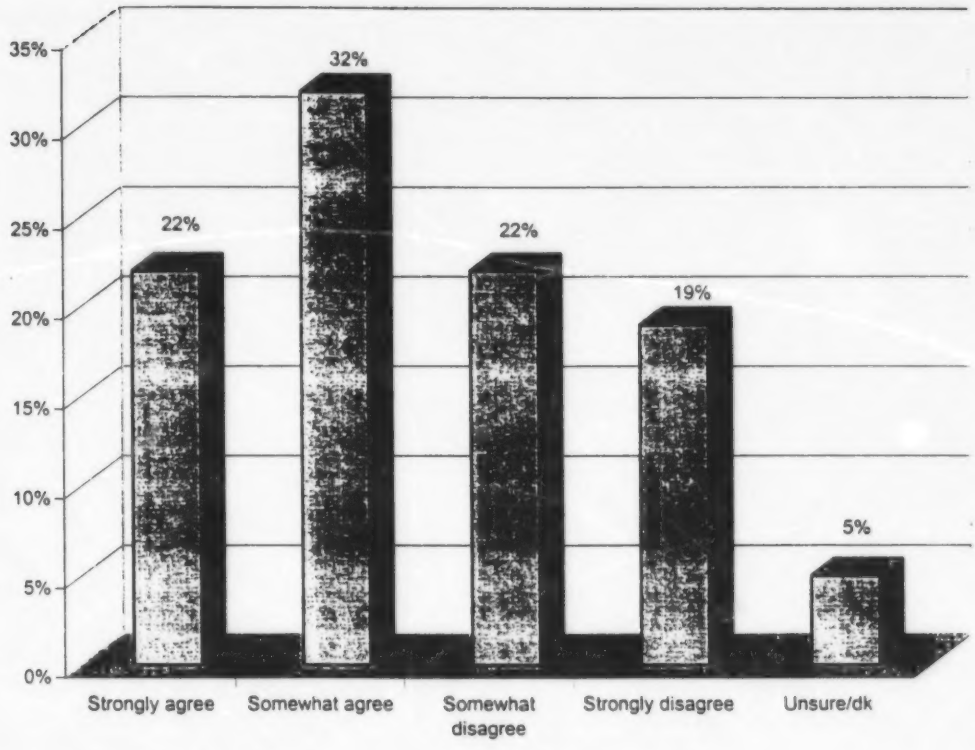
Question. For <u>less</u> serious crimes, there are two approaches to dealing with youth. One is the youth is taken through the court system and has a criminal record. The second is the youth is dealt with outside the court system and has no record. For less serious crimes, which do you think is the preferred method for dealing with a youth?



- Two thirds (67%) of Saskatchewan residents think the preferred method for dealing with a youth who commits a less serious crime think they should be dealt with outside the court system and not have a criminal record. More than one quarter (27%) think they should go through the court system and have a criminal record.

Children under twelve

Question. Currently children under 12 cannot legally be charged with a crime, but are dealt with in the Child Welfare program. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with this policy?

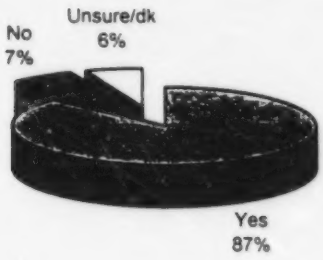


- The majority of residents (54%) agree with a policy where children under 12 cannot legally be charged with a crime but are dealt with in the Child Welfare program. Almost as many people disagree or are unsure which implies that it depends upon the severity of the offence.

5.0 CHILDREN'S ISSUES

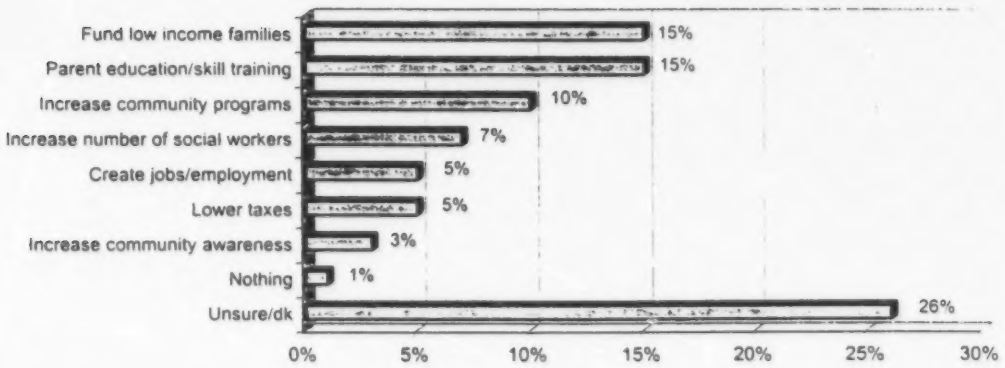
Child poverty

Question. Do you think child poverty is an issue in Saskatchewan?



- The large majority of residents (87%) think child poverty is an issue in Saskatchewan.

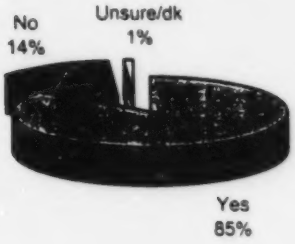
Question. What do you think should be done to address the issue of child poverty in the province?



- Approximately 15% of Saskatchewan residents think funding low income families is a step to addressing the issue of child poverty in the province, another 15% mention parent education and skills training and 10% think increasing community programs would help address the issue of child poverty in the province.

Child abuse or neglect

Question. Did you know that there are legal responsibilities that people have if they are aware of a situation where a child is being abused or neglected?



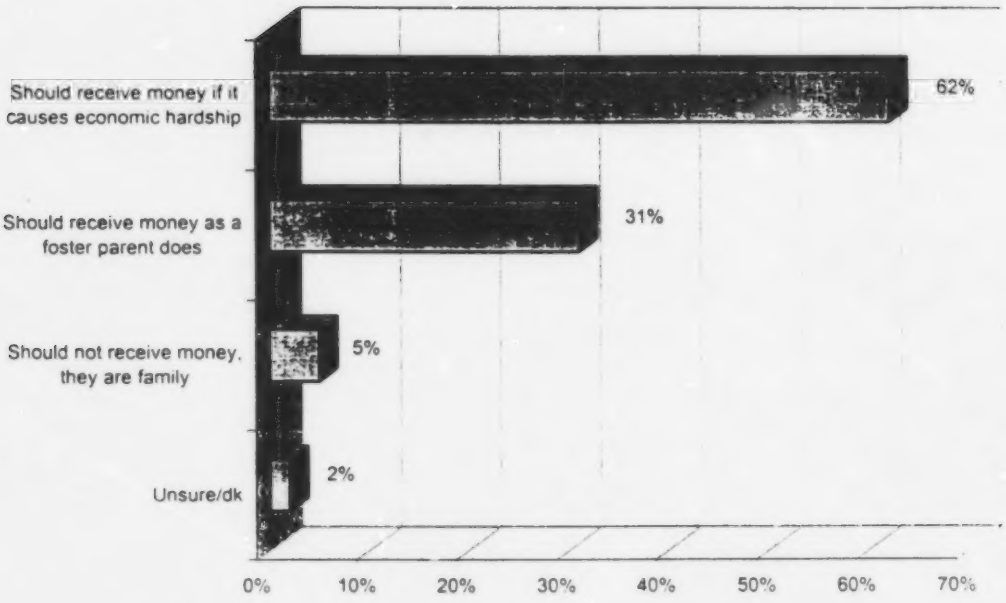
- The large majority (85%) of residents are aware of legal responsibilities they have if they are aware of a situation where a child is being abused or neglected.

Question. Do you know what these responsibilities are?

- Two thirds (67%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate the responsibility that people have if they are aware of a situation where a child is being abused or neglected is to notify the authorities.

Extended families

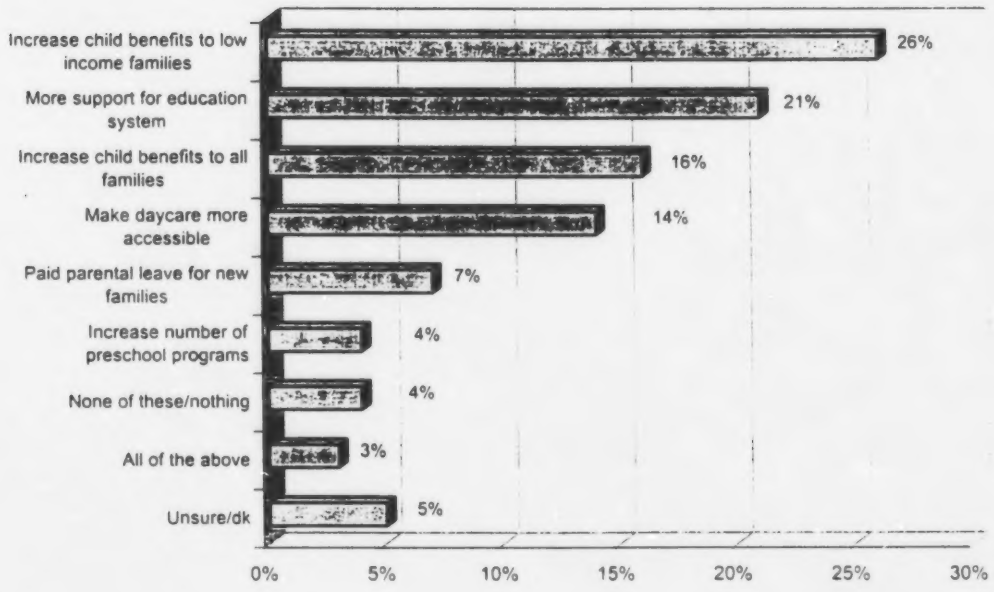
Question. Children who are taken from homes for their own safety are often placed with members of their extended families, such as an aunt or grandfather, rather than with a foster family. Do you think:



- The majority of residents (62%) think members of the extended family that takes a child for their own safety should receive some money if taking the child causes them economic hardship and 31% think they should receive money as a regular foster parent does.

Raising children

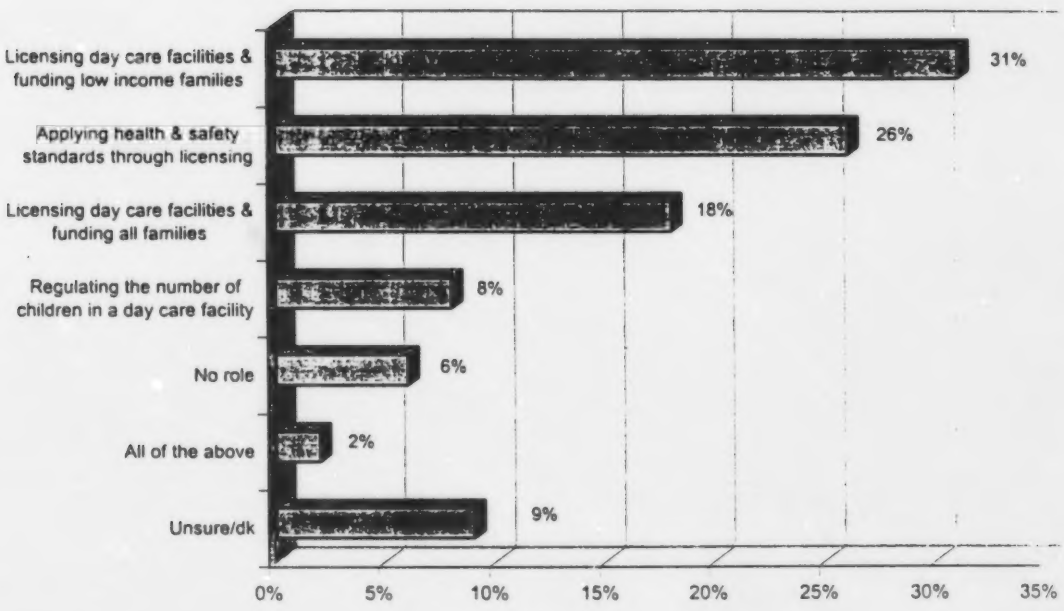
Question. People have indicated they want a variety of services to help all families raise their children. Which of the following do you think is the most important thing the government can do to help families raise their children?



- The most important thing the government could do to help families raise their children, according to 26% of residents, is to increase child benefits to low income families, 21% say provide more support for the educational system, 16% think increase child benefits to all families and 14% say make day care more accessible.

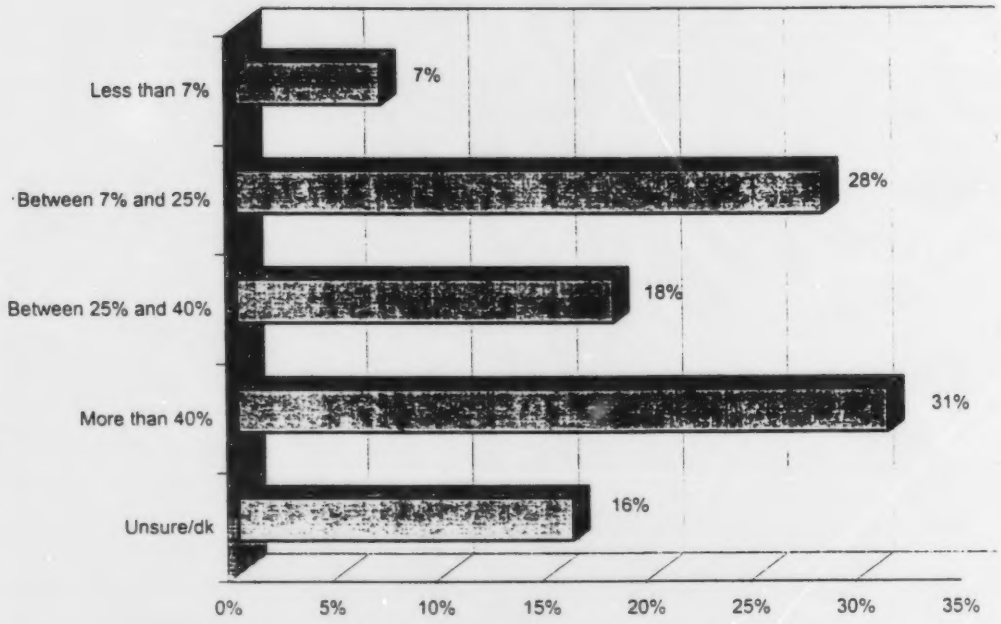
Child day care

Question. What role does government have in helping working parents to ensure their children are safe while in child day care facilities?



- Almost one third of Saskatchewan residents (31%) think the government's role in helping working parents ensure their children are safe while in day care facilities is licensing all day care facilities and funding low income families. Approximately 26% say applying health and safety standards through licensing and 18% think the government's role should be licensing day care facilities and funding all families.

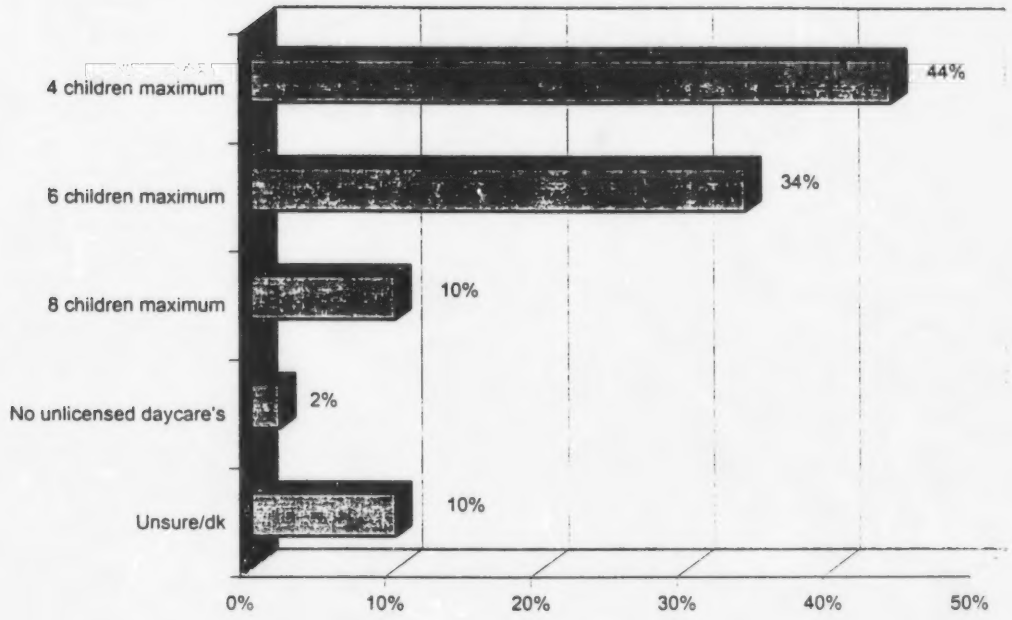
Question. The government currently helps to ensure the health and safety of children in day care by requiring commercial child care centres to be licensed and by requiring persons providing child care in their homes to meet certain standards. The commercial child care centres currently licensed by the government provide enough spaces for about 7% of Saskatchewan's children in day care. Should the government be licensing more or fewer child care centres?



- Most Saskatchewan residents believe that the government should be licensing enough spaces for more of Saskatchewan's children in day care than they currently are.

- Approximately 31% of residents think the government should be licensing enough day care centres to provide spaces for more than 40% of Saskatchewan children in day care, while 28% think enough day care spaces should be licensed for between 7% and 25% of Saskatchewan children in day care.

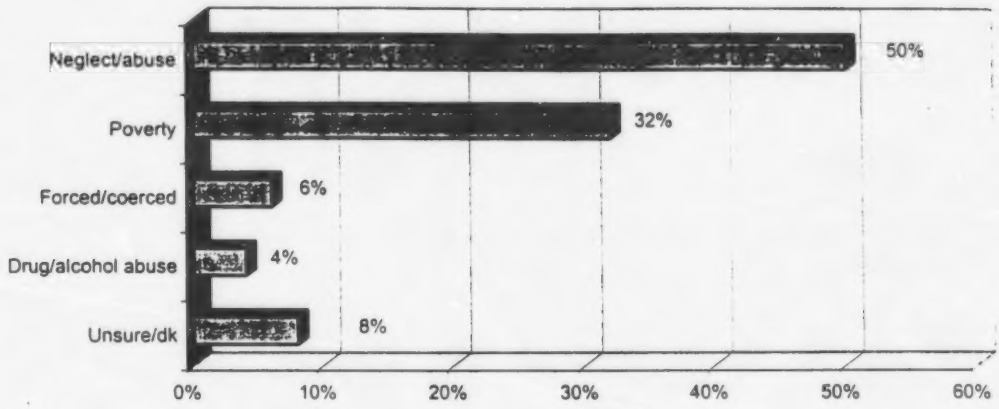
Question. All provinces and territories currently help to ensure children in unlicensed child day care homes are safe, especially in case of fire, by limiting the number of children permitted in a caregivers home at any one time. Most provinces allow a maximum of 4 to 6 children in unlicensed child care homes, while Saskatchewan allows up to 8 children. How many children should Saskatchewan allow in unlicensed family child care homes when there is only one caregiver on duty?



- Most residents believe Saskatchewan should allow 6 children or less in unlicensed day care homes when there is only one caregiver on duty.
- Slightly less than one half (44%) of residents think Saskatchewan should allow a maximum of 4 children in unlicensed day care homes when there is only one caregiver on duty, while 34% think 6 children should be the maximum.

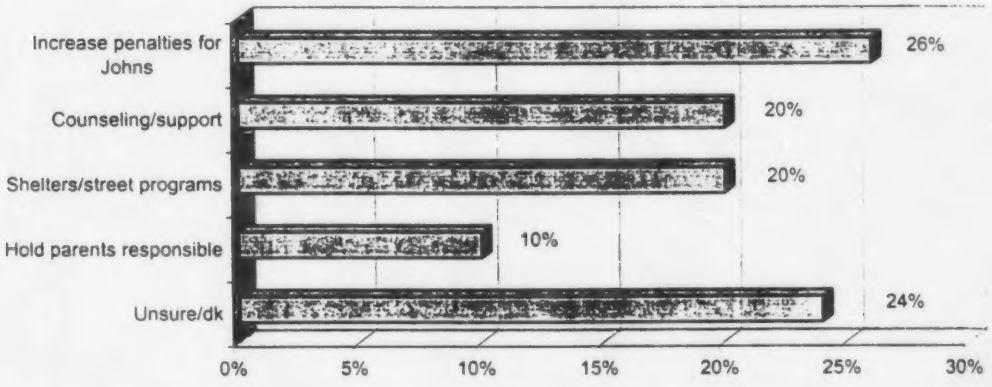
Children and youth involved in prostitution

Question. Why do you think children and youth are involved in prostitution?



- One half of residents (50%) think children and youth are involved in prostitution because of abuse and neglect, while 32% think it is because of poverty.

Question. What do you think should be done about it?



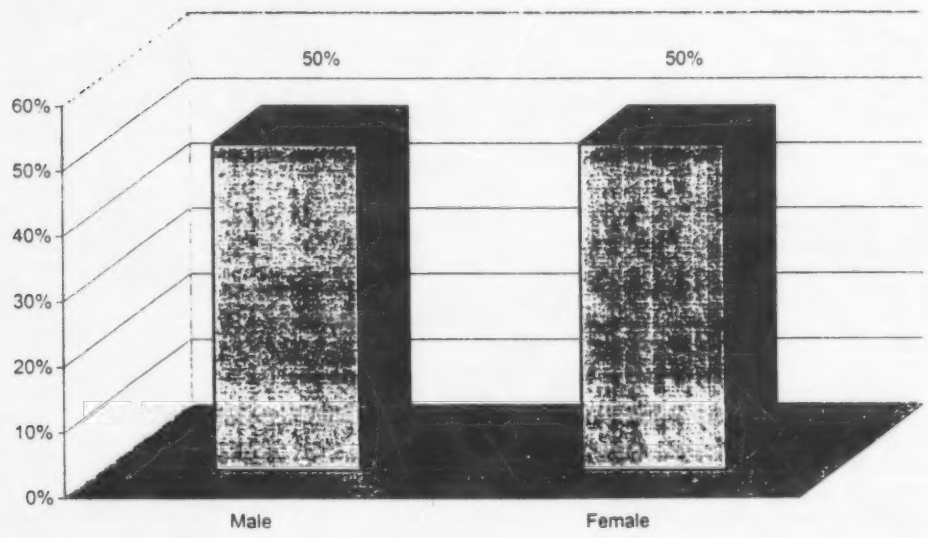
- More than one quarter (26%) think increasing penalties for Johns, 20% think providing counselling and support and another 20% think having more street programs and shelters could help reduce the number of children and youth involved in prostitution.

APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

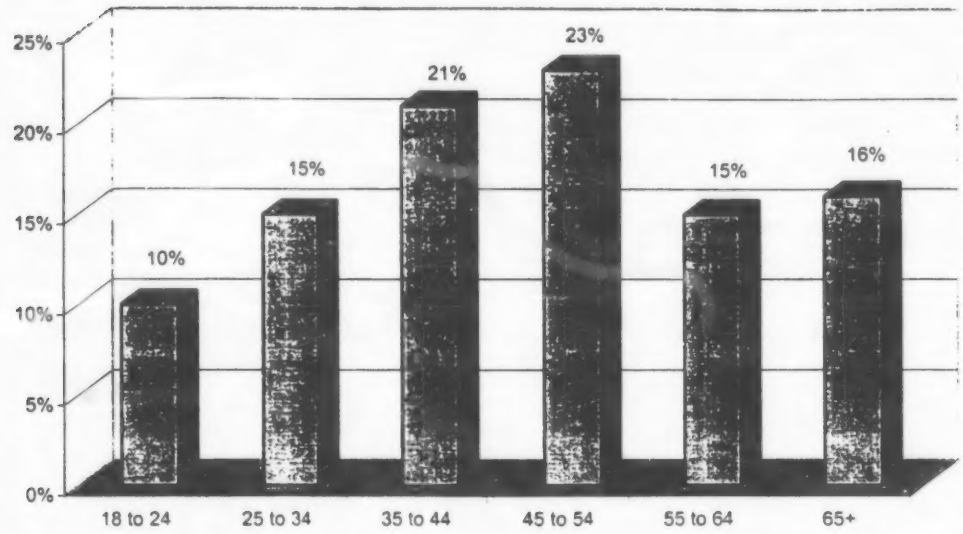
The Department of Social Services public opinion sample frame is constructed to facilitate proportionate representation of various demographic characteristics evident within the province of Saskatchewan. This ensures that opinions of all the various types of residents in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report. The demographic distributions from the survey sample generally parallel the province's actual population distributions, as measured by Statistics Canada census data.

The Department of Social Services survey sample size of 750 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.6 percentage points.

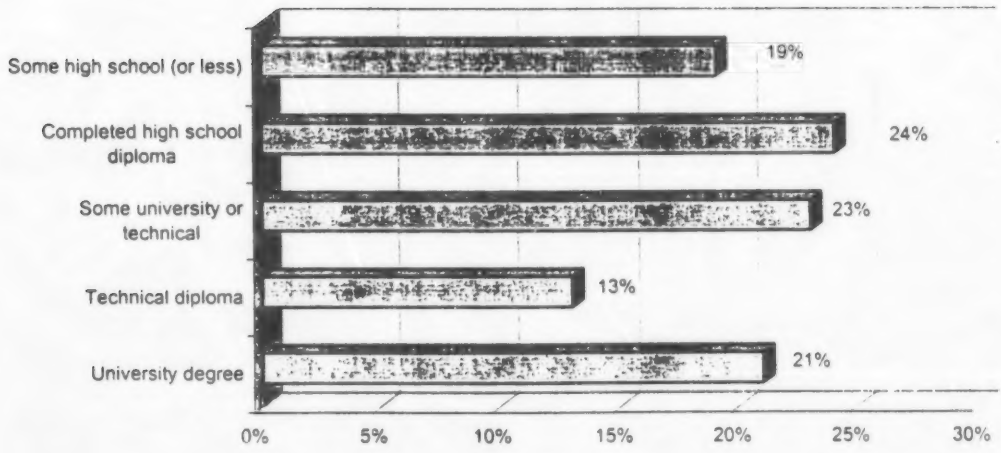
Survey sample gender distribution



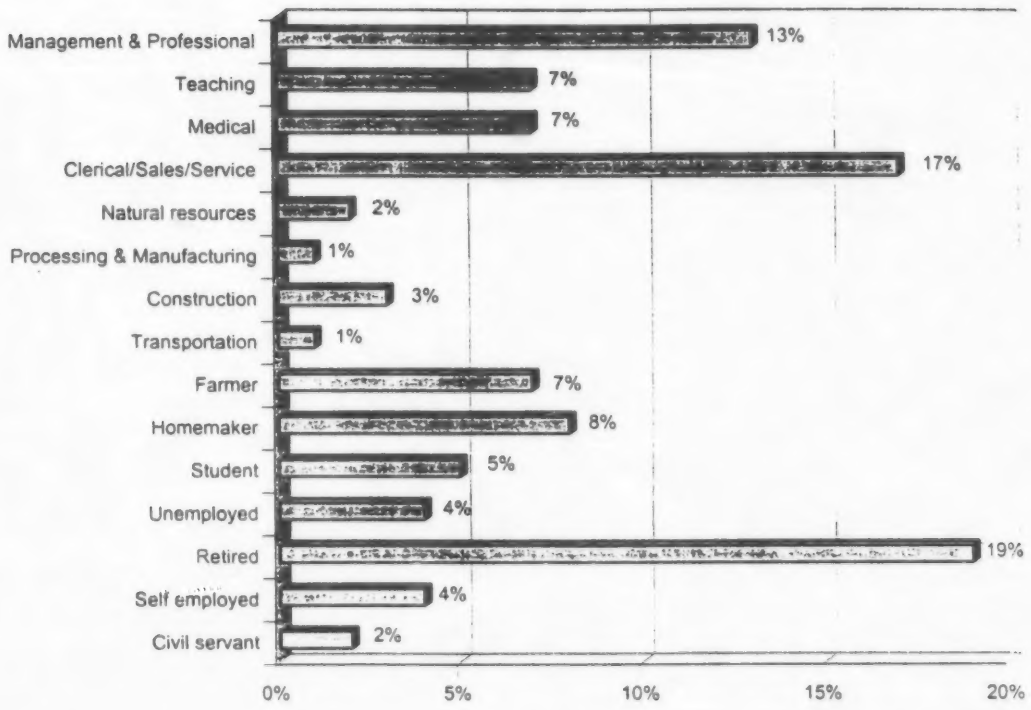
Survey sample age distribution



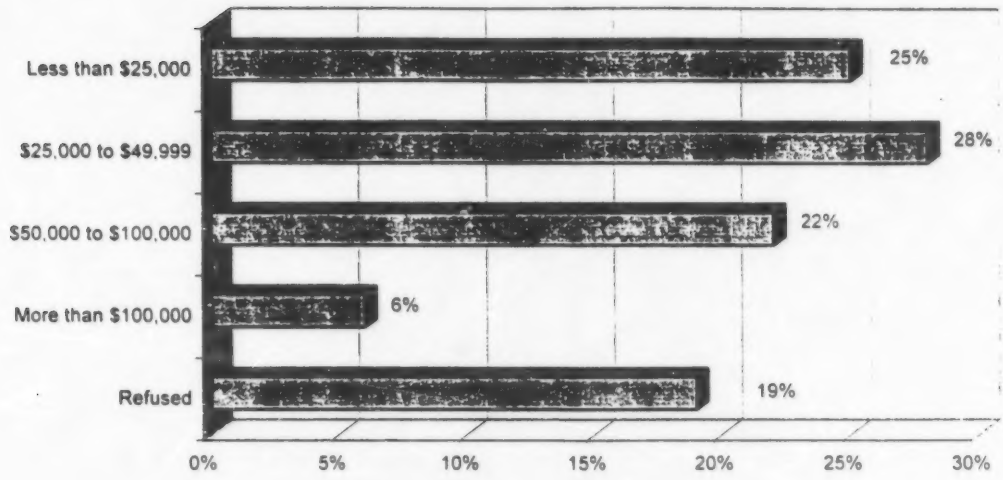
Survey sample education distribution



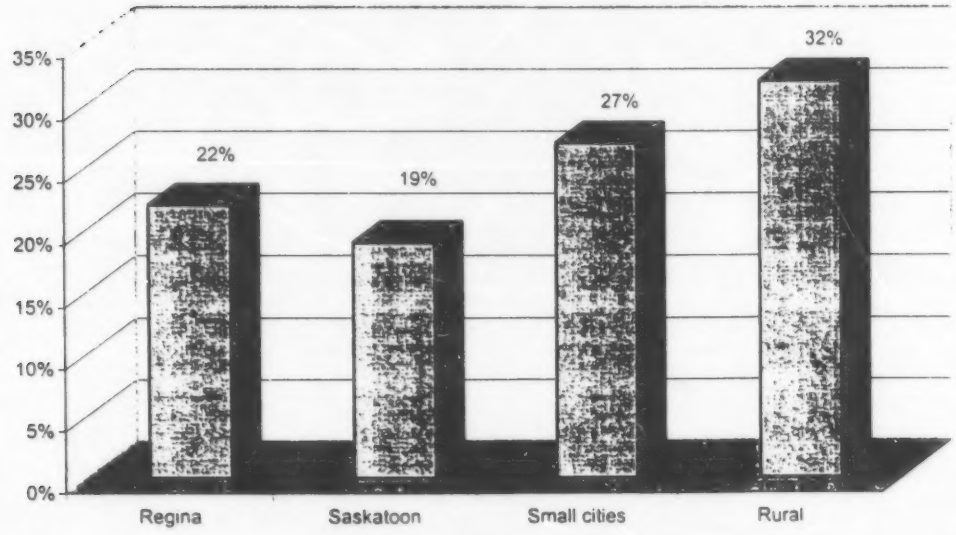
Survey sample occupation distribution



Survey sample income distribution



Survey sample region distribution



Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Environment and Resource Management

Date: **April, 2000**

Supplier: **Arcas,**
Regina

Cost: **$11,648***

Note: $9,500 was paid in fiscal year 1999-00 and $2,148 was paid for in 2000-01

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Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management

Environmental Issues – Public Opinion Survey

April 2000

Arcas

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APPENDIX C
Map

Objectives /Methods

The primary objective of this project was to conduct a public opinion survey on environmental issues and produce a preliminary analysis for Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM).

In designing this survey, it was determined that the entire province of Saskatchewan would be divided into three well-defined eco-regions, which are Cypress-Grassland, Aspen-Parkland and Shield-Plain (see Map, Appendix C). A total sample of 404 individuals were interviewed randomly with 95% confidence level in the results; the maximum margin of error is ±4.9. The sample size of each region was determined proportionately to the number of households (Table A, Appendix A). The questionnaires were designed by SERM with collaboration from Arcas Group (Appendix B).

The percentages given in this report are valid and representative of the overall population. By valid we mean that it is a percentage of the total number of responses to that question, not a percentage of the total number of individuals asked that question. Valid percentages are predicted values of the true population parameters of interest and can be used to predict the responses of non-respondents.

Research Highlights

- Air pollution (27.5% & 29.2%) is the most important environmental issue in local community and province.

- The most important environmental issue that affect the respondents personally is water quality (average score of 4.5 of a possible score of 5.0).

- The majority (69.8%) of respondents agreed that health is the main benefit of protecting our environment.

- On an open question, only 7.4% of respondents recognized SERM as having a responsibility for protecting of the environment. Approximately 49.3% of respondents had heard of SERM as a Saskatchewan organization.

- There was a low level of trust in the provincial government department responsible for the environment. Average scores are slightly below the mid-point of 3 (between 1 to 5; 3 - Sometimes) on trusting the department on issues such as: puts environment quality first in the decisions, responds quickly to environmental issues, and follows through on what say they will do.

- Respondents generally believe SERM has no impact on economic development in Saskatchewan. There was an average score of 3.5 (between the points 3 - No impact and 4 - Somewhat positive) on the type of effect the department has on economic development.

- Greater than 80% of respondents who had heard of SERM, correctly identified SERM activities.

- The majority (57.9%) of respondents were satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision-making processes on issues affecting the environment locally. Conversely, 61.3% of respondents were not satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision-making processes on issues affecting the environment provincially.

- The respondents were neutral on their assessment of the overall quality of the environment in Saskatchewan over the past five years. Most felt that the overall quality over the past five years has been constant.

- Approximately one-third of the respondents think that the overall quality of the environment in Saskatchewan for the next five years will deteriorate.

- Most of the respondents (greater than 70%) felt that they have the information to make sound environmental decisions regarding environmental issues at home. These issues included recycling, garbage disposal and energy consumption.

- The respondents felt that the most useful approach in reducing environmental pollution is publishing the names of polluters (average score of 4.1 of 5.0).

- Respondents believe that Saskatchewan's environmental laws and regulations governing industries and individuals are somewhat easy (average score of 2.13 and 2.25 respectively).

- The vast majority of respondents (greater than 80%) think that the quality of environment in Saskatchewan is significantly better than other areas (Canada, North America and World)

- The majority of respondents (greater than 60%) chose the correct definitions of the terms ecosystem, ecology, environment and biodiversity.

Results

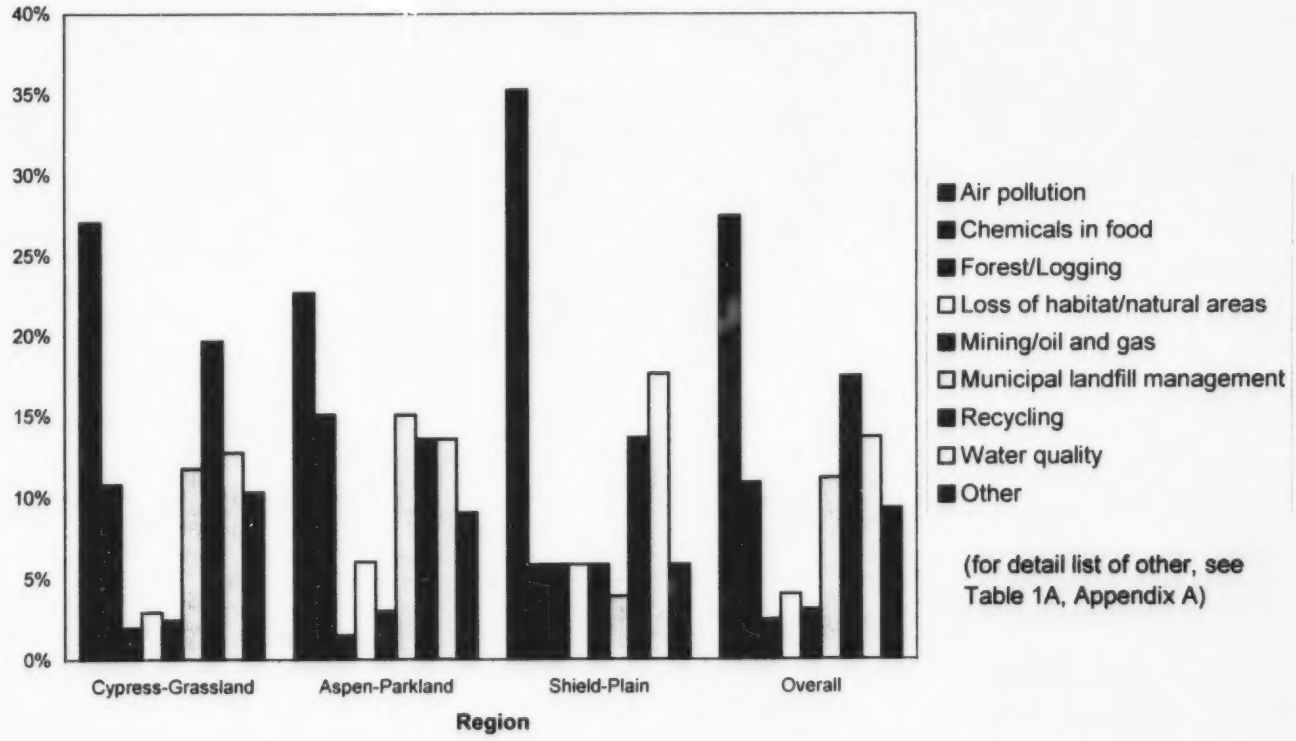
Q1. What is the most important environmental issue in your community?

On this open-ended question (without defining any categories), the most important environmental issue on a community basis is air pollution by all regions, followed by recycling (19.7%) in Cypress-Grassland; chemicals in food and municipal landfill management (15.2% each) in Aspen-Parkland; and water quality (17.7%) in Shield-Plain (Chart 1).

Q2. What is the most important environmental issue in the province as a whole?

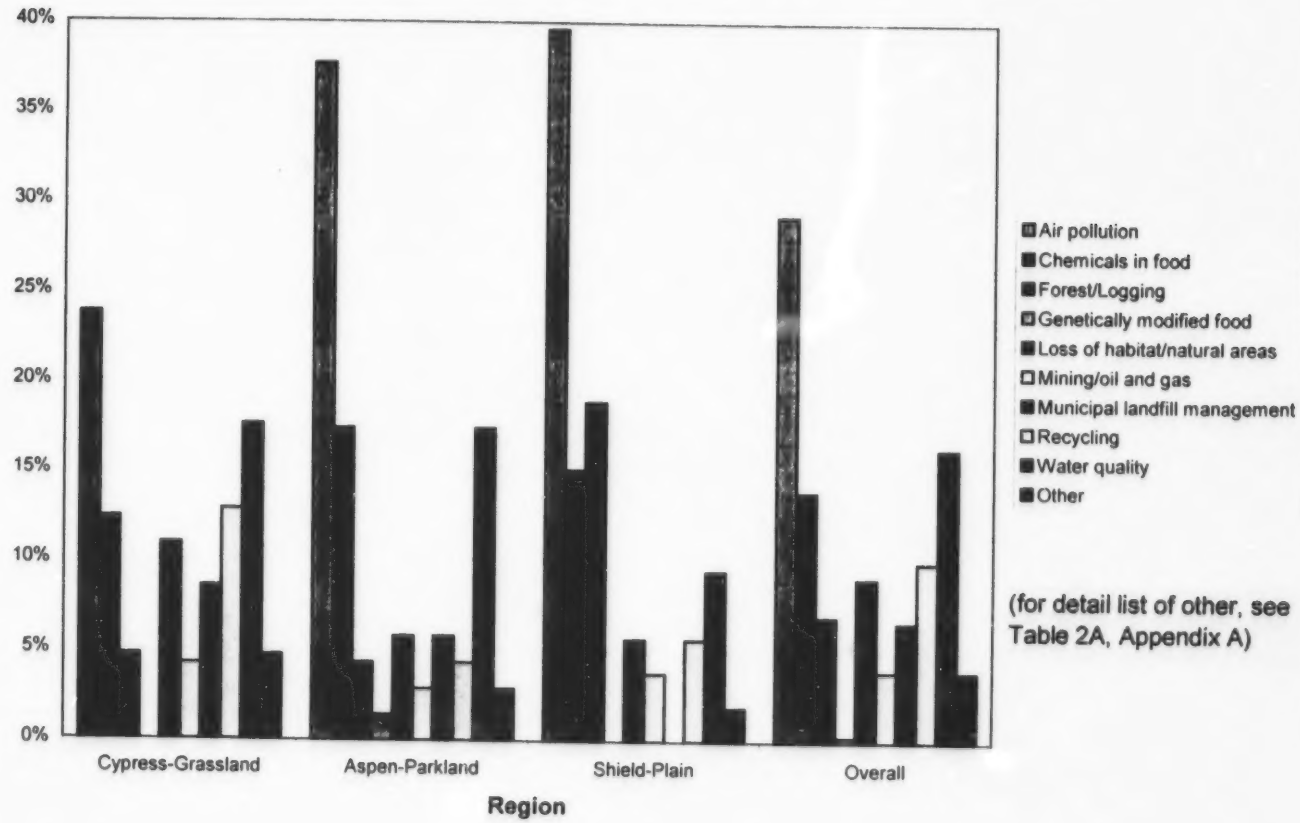
On this open-ended question, the most important environmental issue in the province is air pollution by all regions, followed by water quality (17.6%) in Cypress-Grassland; chemicals in food and water quality (17.4% each) in Aspen-Parkland; and forest/logging (18.9%) in Shield-Plain (Chart 2).

Chart 1. The most important environmental issue in your community by Region



(for detail list of other, see Table 1A, Appendix A)

Chart 2. The most important environmental issue in the province by Region



(for detail list of other, see Table 2A, Appendix A)

Q3. Please rate the importance of each of the following environmental issues as they affect you personally. Please use the scale from 1 to 5, where '1' is Not at all important, 2' is Somewhat unimportant, '3' is Neutral, '4' is Somewhat important and '5' is Very Important.

The environmental issue of water quality has a significantly higher average score (4.5) compared to other environmental issues in all regions (Table 3A, Appendix A). On the other hand, mining and livestock have significantly lower average scores, which are close to the mid-point 3 (Chart 3).

Q4. What do you think are the main benefits of protecting our environment?

On this open-ended question, the majority of respondents (69.8%) in all regions think health is one of the main benefits, followed by wildlife [(23.51%); Chart 4].

Chart 3. Average Score of Environmental issues by Region

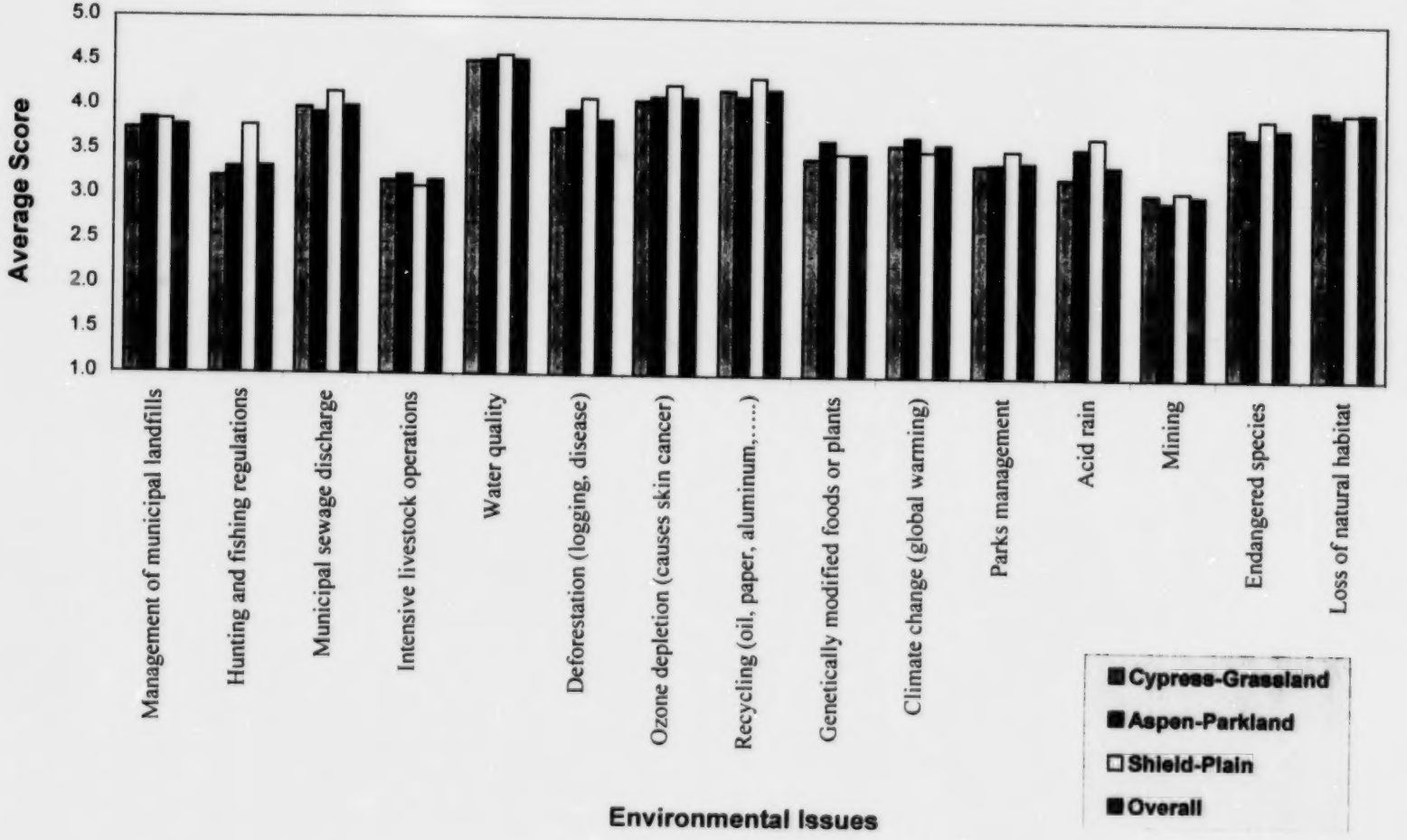
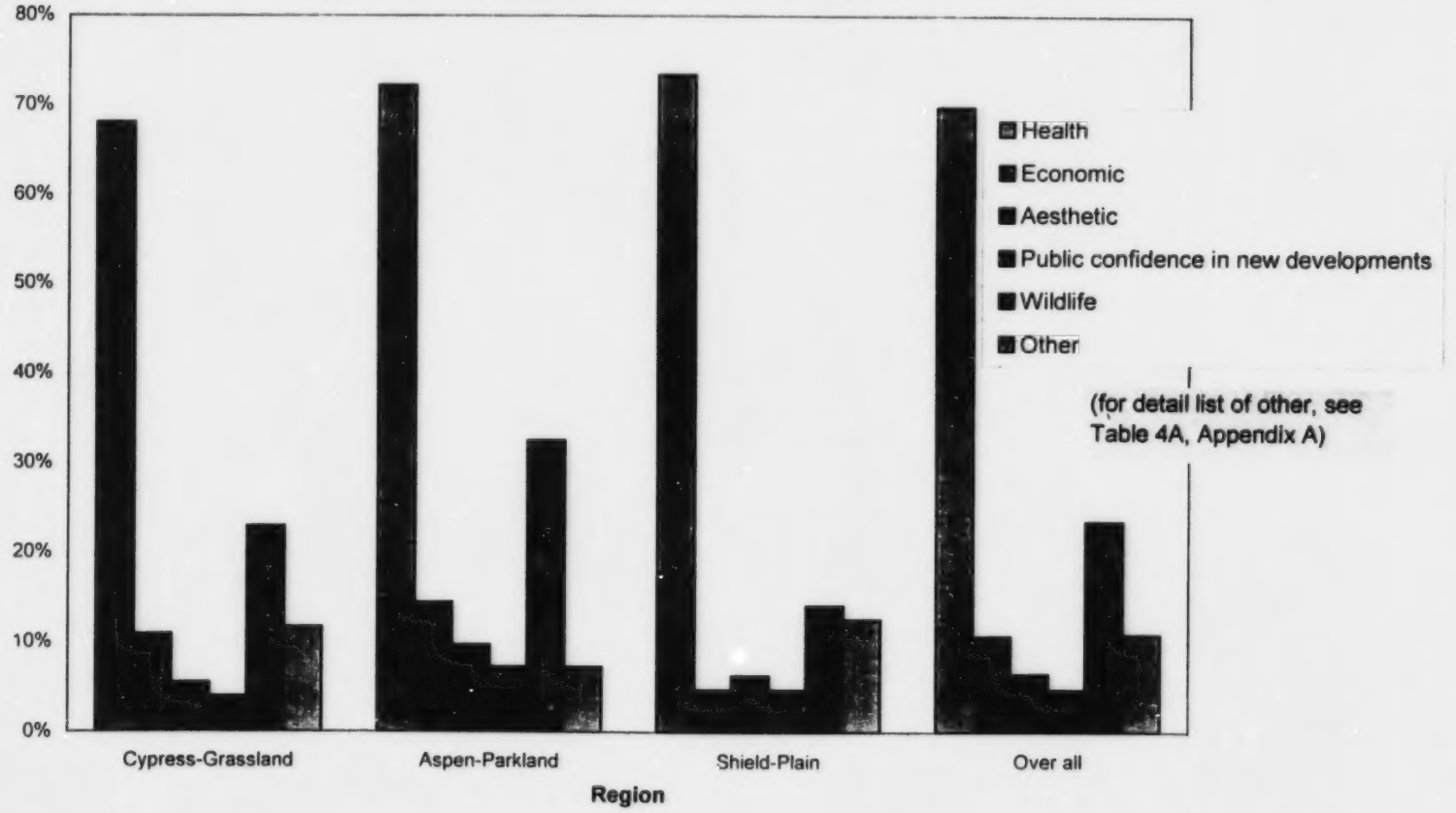


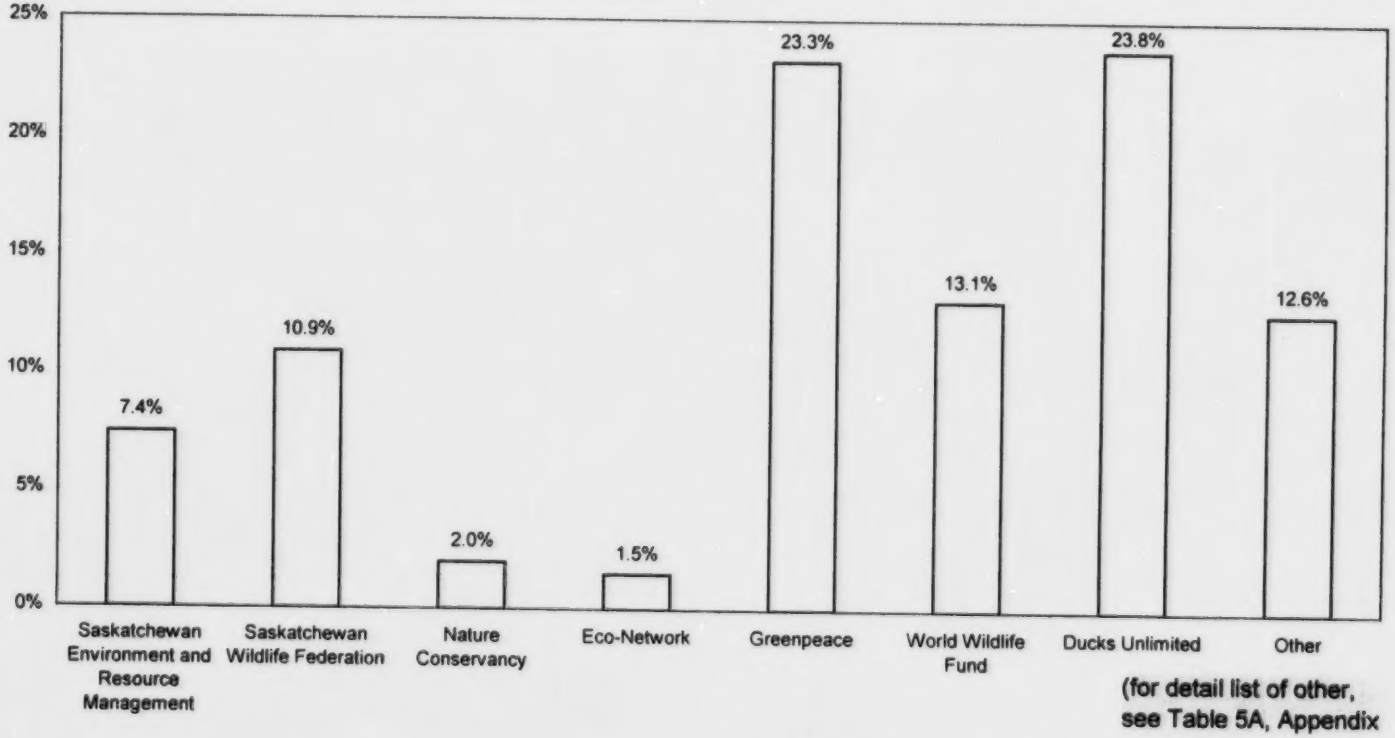
Chart 4. Benefits of Protecting Environment by Region



Q5. A number of organizations have responsibilities for protecting the environment in Saskatchewan. Can you name any?

The most well known organizations are Ducks Unlimited (23.8%) and Greenpeace (23.3%). Only 7.4% named SERM (Chart 5).

Chart 5. Name of Organizations having Responsibilities for Protecting the Environment.



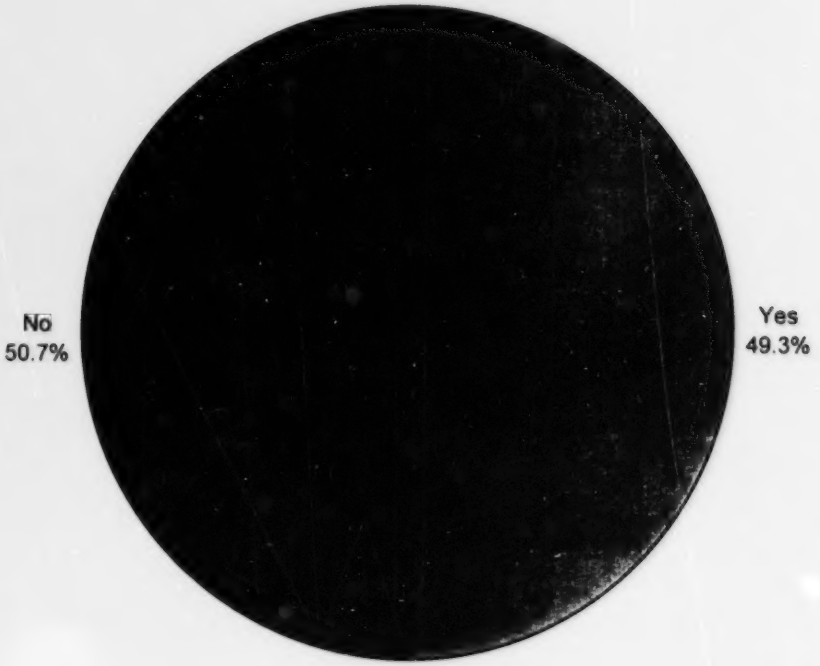
(for detail list of other, see Table 5A, Appendix

Arcas

Q6. Have you ever heard of an organization named Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management?

About half of the respondents heard of an organization named SERM (Chart 6).

Chart 6. Have you ever heard of an organization named Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management?



Q7. Do you trust that the provincial government department responsible for the environment:

a. **Puts environment quality first in its decisions?**
b. **Responds quickly to environmental issues?**
c. **Follows through on what they say they will do?**

The average score of the above three options are between 2.5 to 3.1, which indicates trust in the provincial government department responsible for the environment on those factors is weak (Chart 7). Among them option c has a significantly lower average score compared to option a, except in the Shield-Plain region (Table 7A, Appendix A).

Q8. What type of effect do you think the provincial department of the environment has on economic development in Saskatchewan? (see Q8, Appendix B for possible answers)

Region Aspen-Parkland has the highest average score of 3.8 (close to the point 4 – somewhat positive). While the other two regions have scores close to point 3 – no impact on economic development in Saskatchewan (Chart 8).

Chart 7. Do You Trust that the Provincial Govt. Responsible for the Environment:

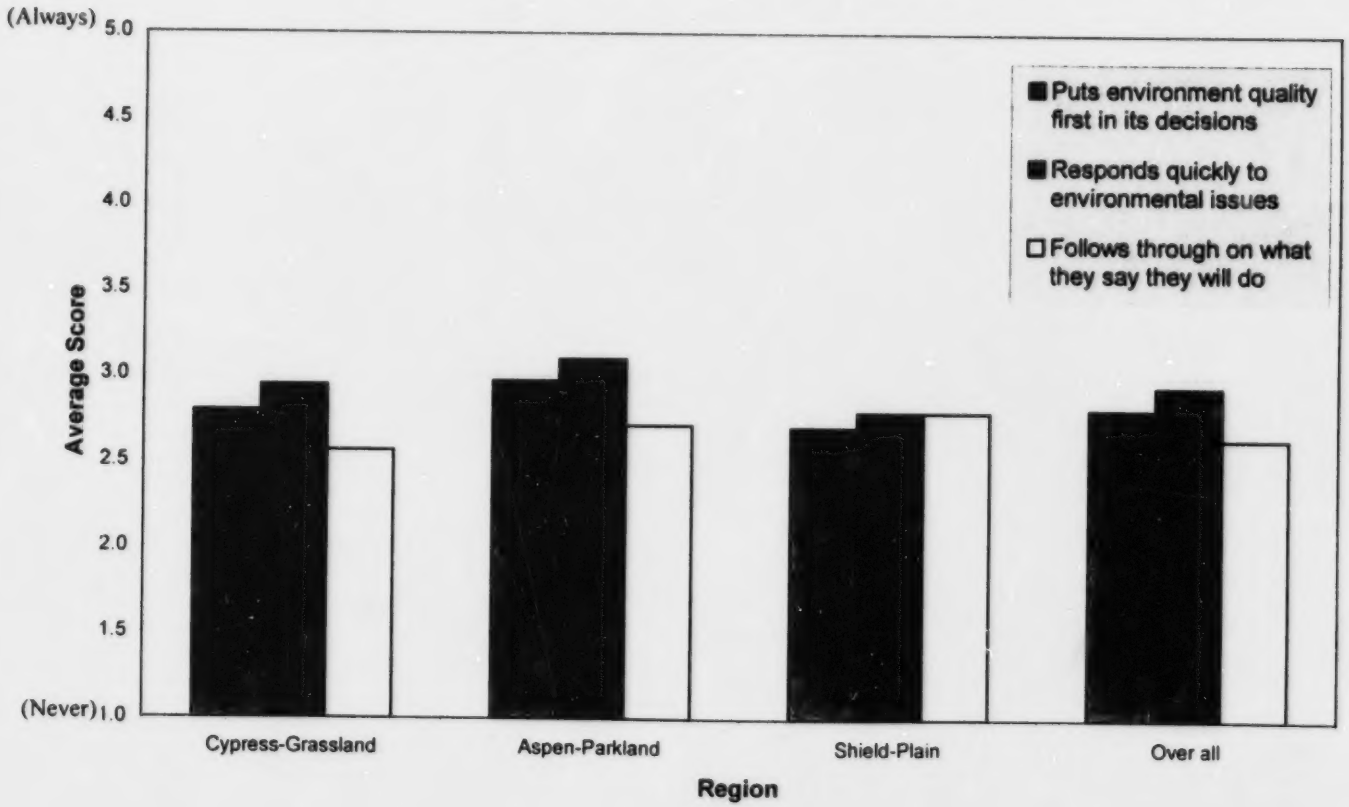
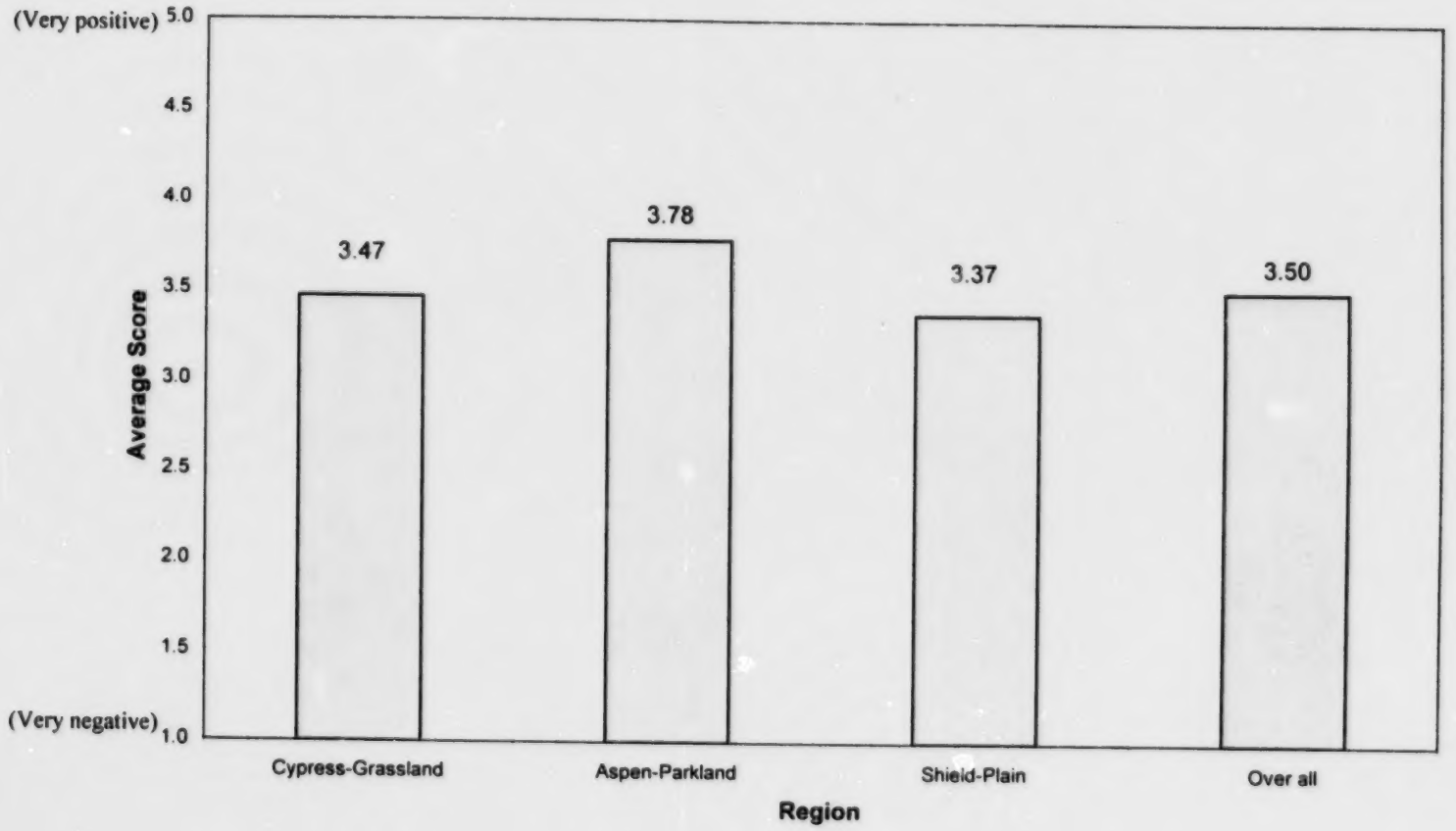


Chart 8. Average Score of How the Provincial Department of the Environment affects Economic Development in Saskatchewan by Region



Q9. Please answer yes or no as to whether you think that these following activities are done by Environment and Resource Management?

Among the respondents who had heard of SERM, the majority (80% or above) correctly identified the SERM activities. On the other hand, overall 50% to 60% answered incorrectly to the activities, except 'Manufacture industrial filters' (Chart 9). There is a possibility of some random bias, in favour of the correct answers due to the fact that there are five correct answers and four wrong answers.

Q10. Are you satisfied that you have opportunities to participate in decision-making processes on issues affecting the environment

a. **Locally?**
b. **Provincially?**

Majority (57.9%) of respondents are satisfied locally. Provincially only 38.7% are satisfied (Chart 10).

Chart 9. Percent of Respondents believed that the following Activities are Managed by Environment and Resource Management

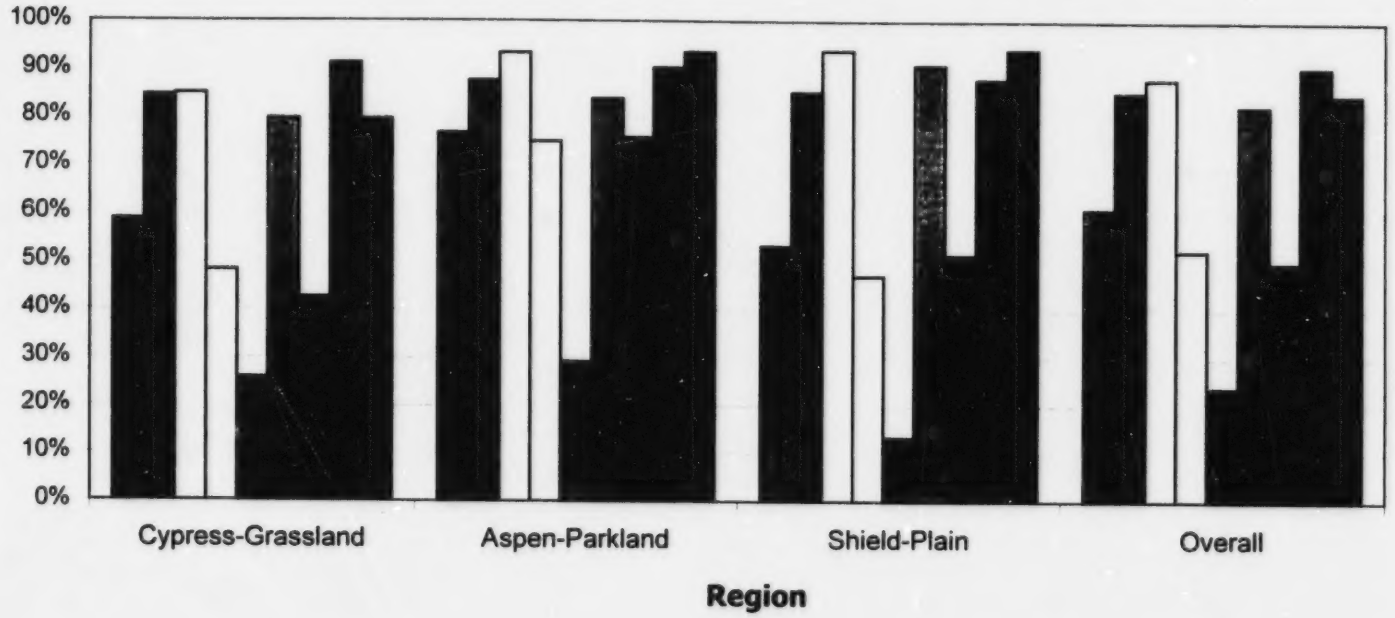
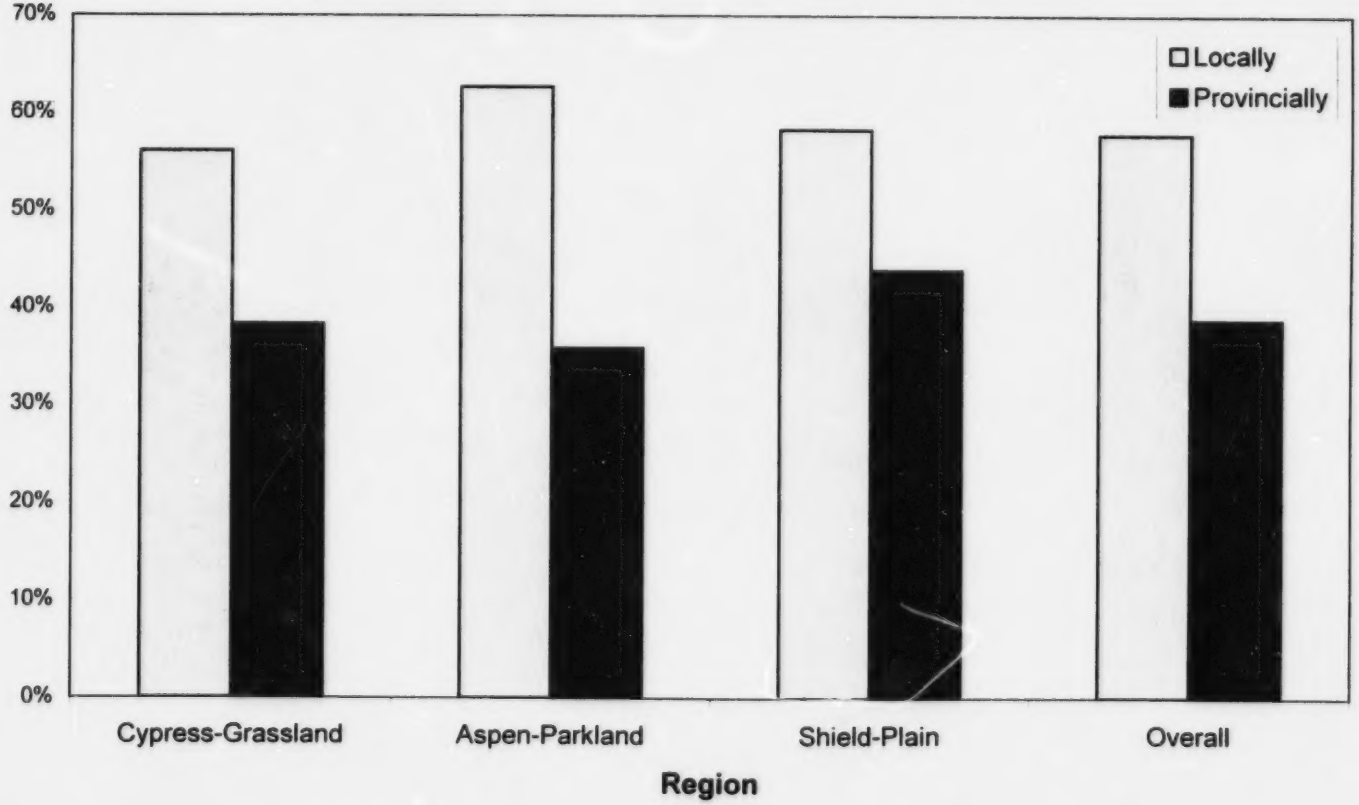


Chart 10. Are you satisfied that you have opportunities to participate in decision making processes on issues affecting the environment



Q11. How would you rate the overall quality of the environment in Saskatchewan over the past five years? (for a list of possible answers see Q11, Appendix B)

Average scores from all regions are slightly below the mid-point 3 [(About the same); Chart 11].

Q12. Over the next five years, do you think the overall quality of the environment in Saskatchewan will ...

About one-third of respondents think the overall quality of the environment in Saskatchewan will deteriorate (Chart 12).

Chart 11. Rate the Overall Quality of the Environment in Saskatchewan over the past five years.

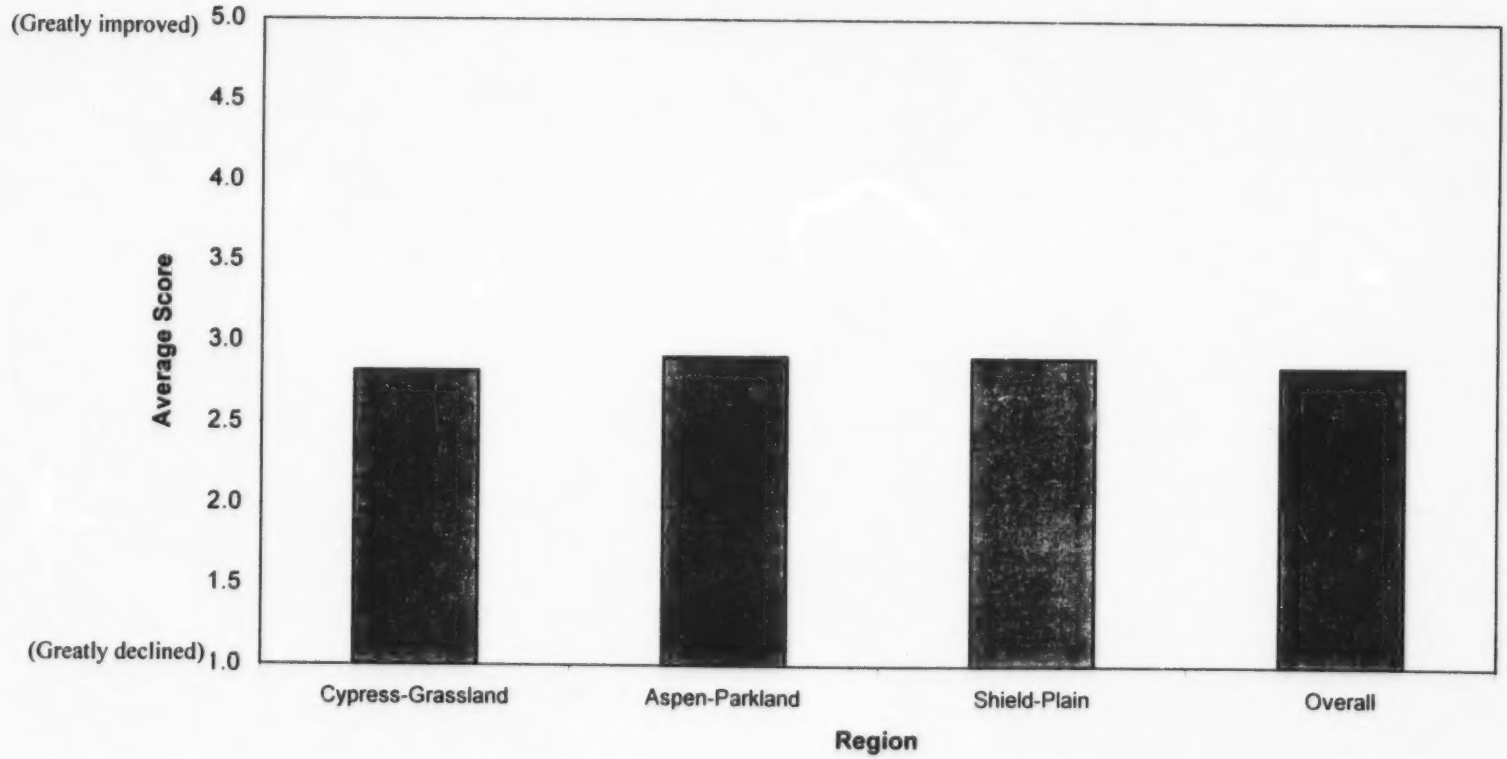
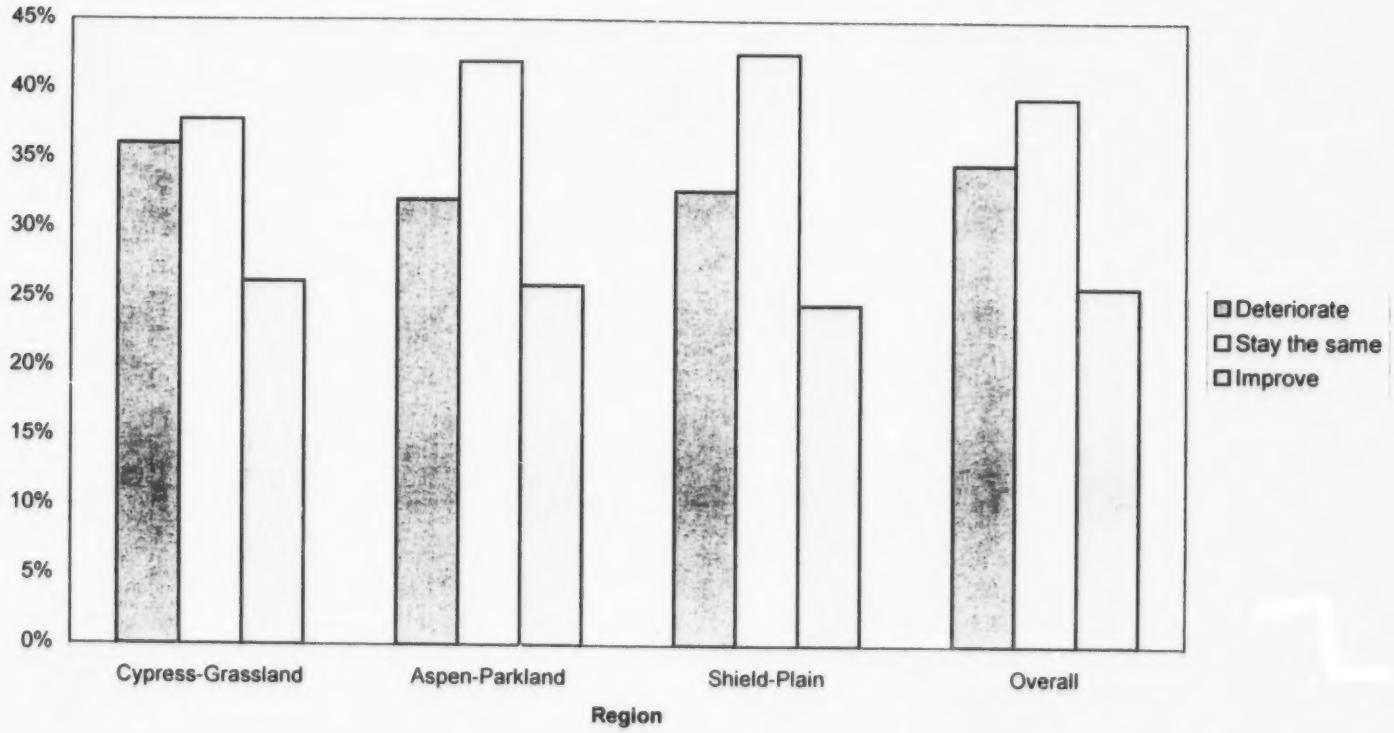


Chart 12. In Next Five Years the Overall Quality of the Environment in Saskatchewan will ...



Q13. Do you have the information you need to make sound environmental decisions in your home regarding:

Majority of respondents (70% or above) believe that they have the information to make sound environmental decisions in their home. Information regarding recycling has the highest overall response rate, followed by water and energy usage (Chart 13). Conversely, 30% of overall respondents admit they don't have adequate knowledge on 'what you should put down the sink', followed by 'how to dispose of household chemicals and containers' (Table 13, Appendix A).

Q14. Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5 where '1' is Not Effective and '5' is Very Effective, the approaches that you think will be most useful in reducing environmental pollution:

Highest average score of 4.1 in reducing environmental pollution is 'Publishing the names of polluters', followed by 'Regular compliance checks' (Chart 14).

Chart 13. Do you have the Information You Need to Make Sound Environmental Decisions in Your Home Regarding ...

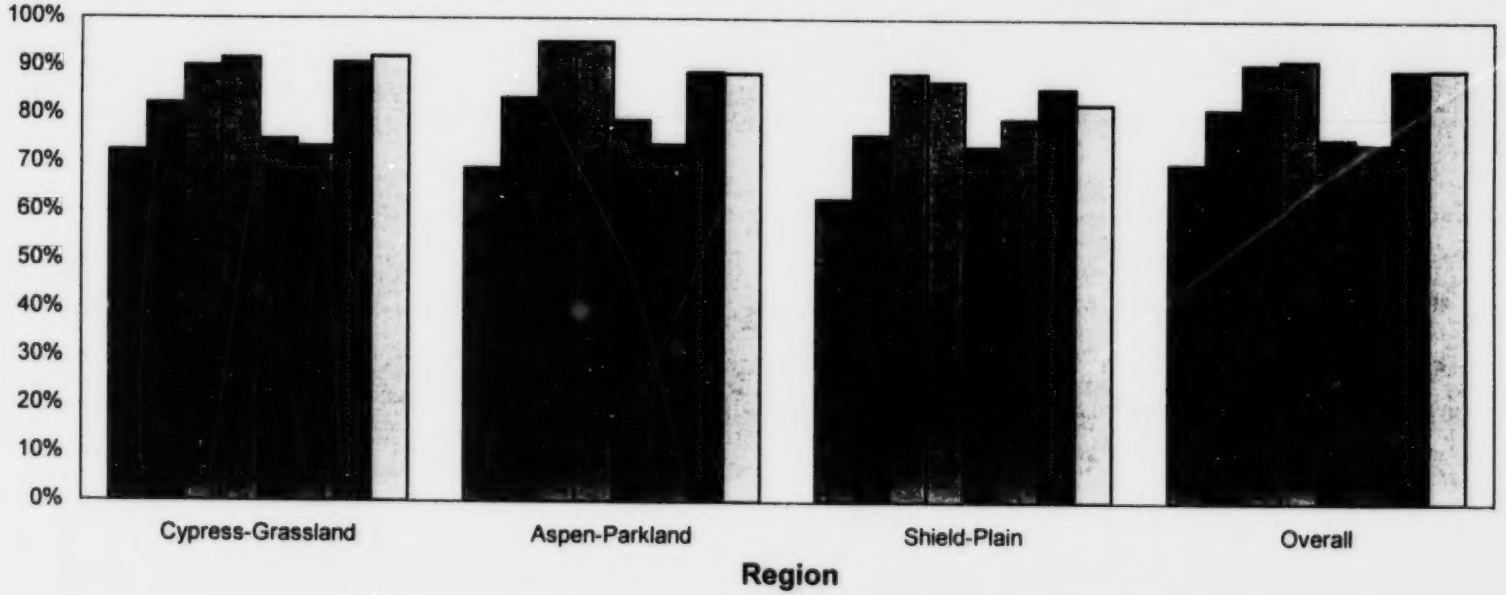
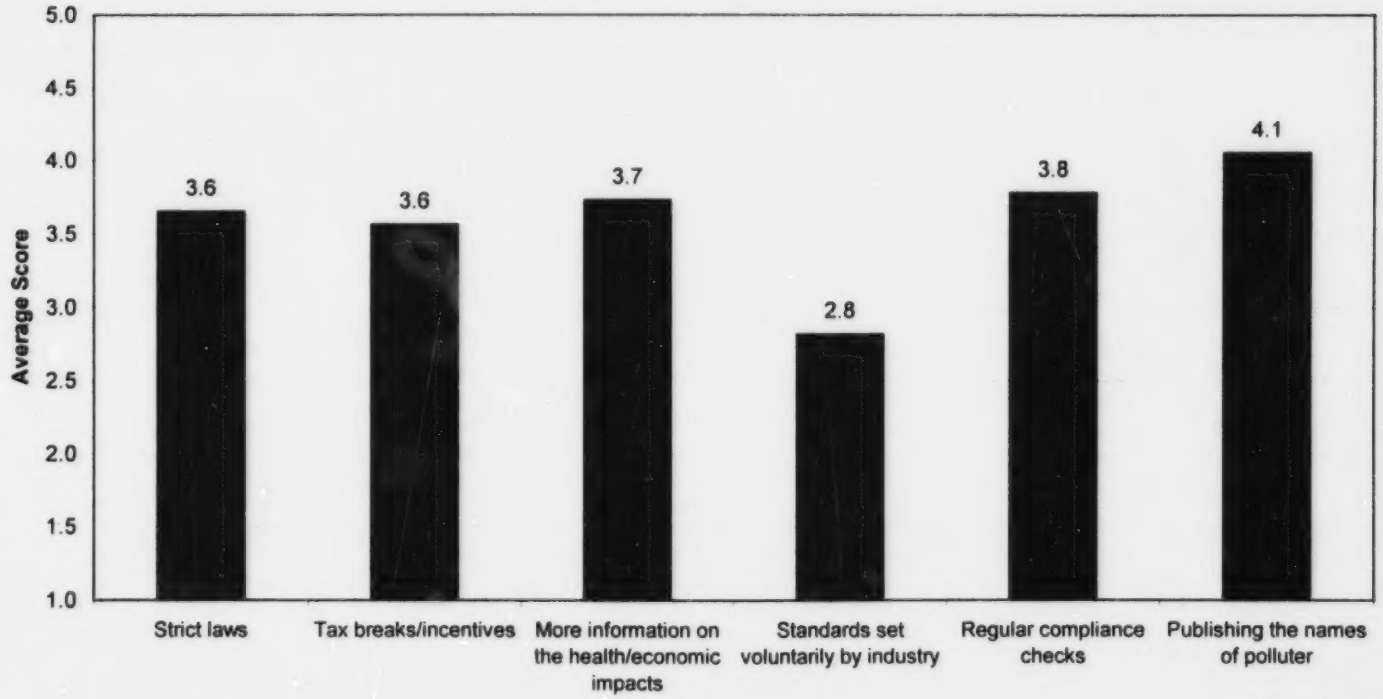


Chart 14. Average Score of the Rate (1 - 5) on the Approaches that You Think will be Most Useful in Reducing Environmental Pollution:



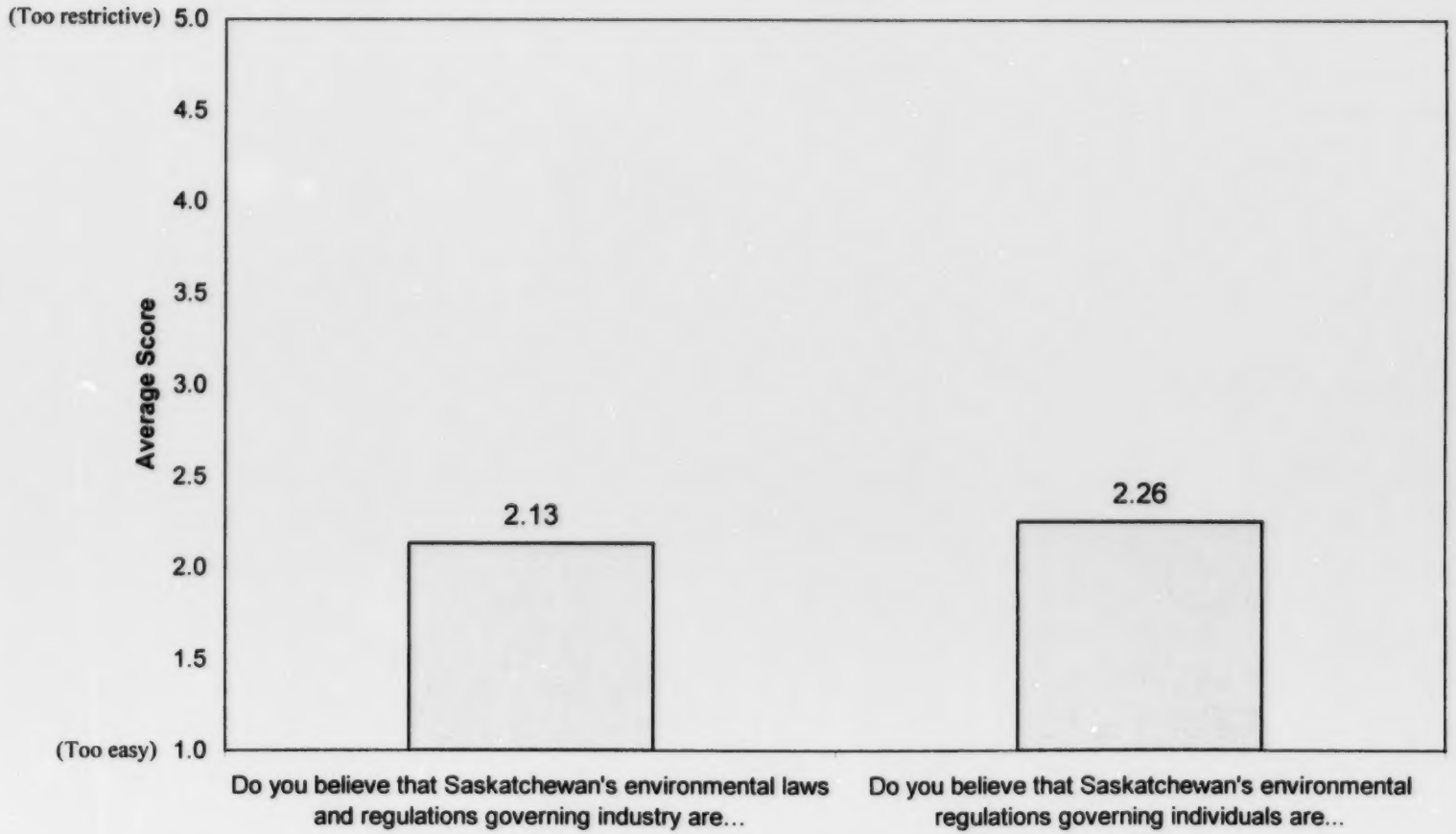
Q15. Do you believe that Saskatchewan's environmental laws and regulations governing industry are ...

People in Saskatchewan believed that environmental laws and regulations governing industries are somewhat easy (Chart 15).

Q16. Do you believe that Saskatchewan's environmental laws and regulations governing individuals are ...

People in Saskatchewan believed that environmental laws and regulations governing individuals are somewhat easy (Chart 15).

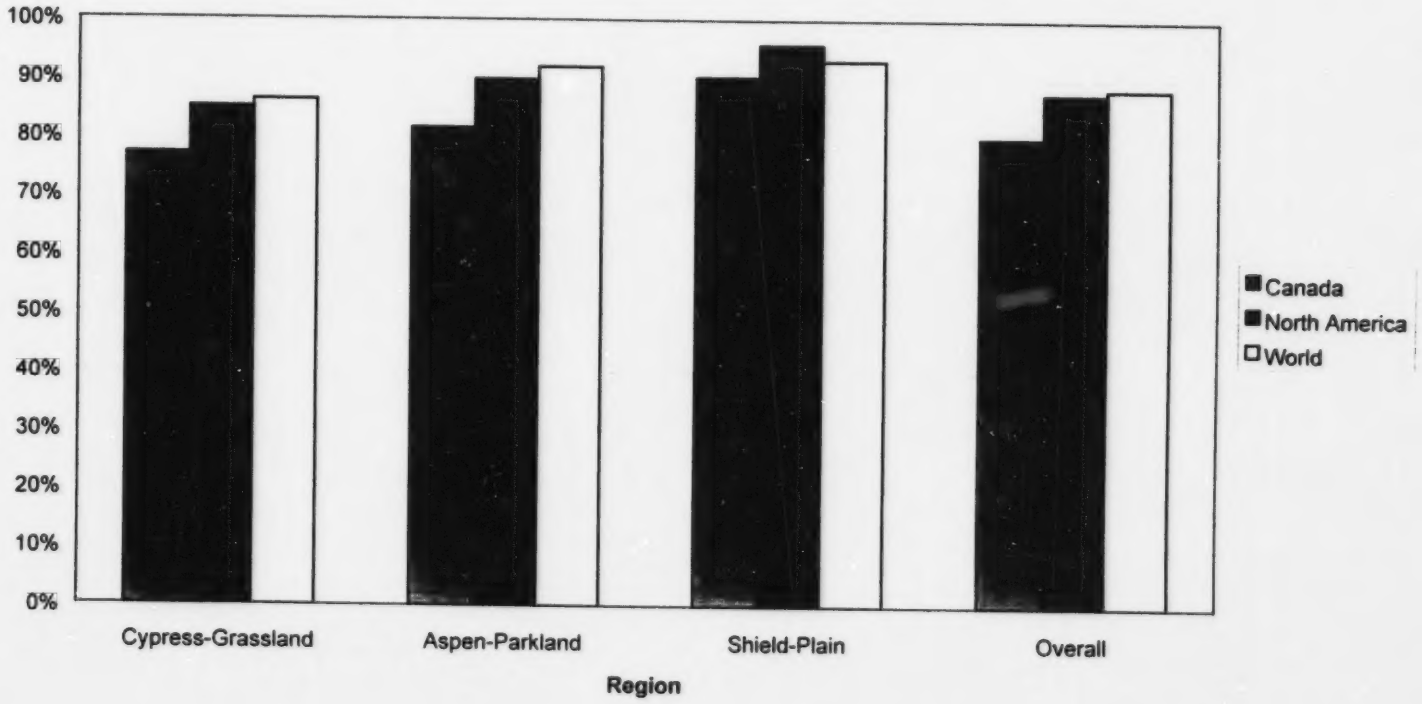
Chart 15. Average Scores



Q17. Do you think that the quality of environment in Saskatchewan is significantly better than other areas of.....

The vast majority of Saskatchewan believes that the quality of environment in Saskatchewan is significantly better than the rest of the world (Chart 16).

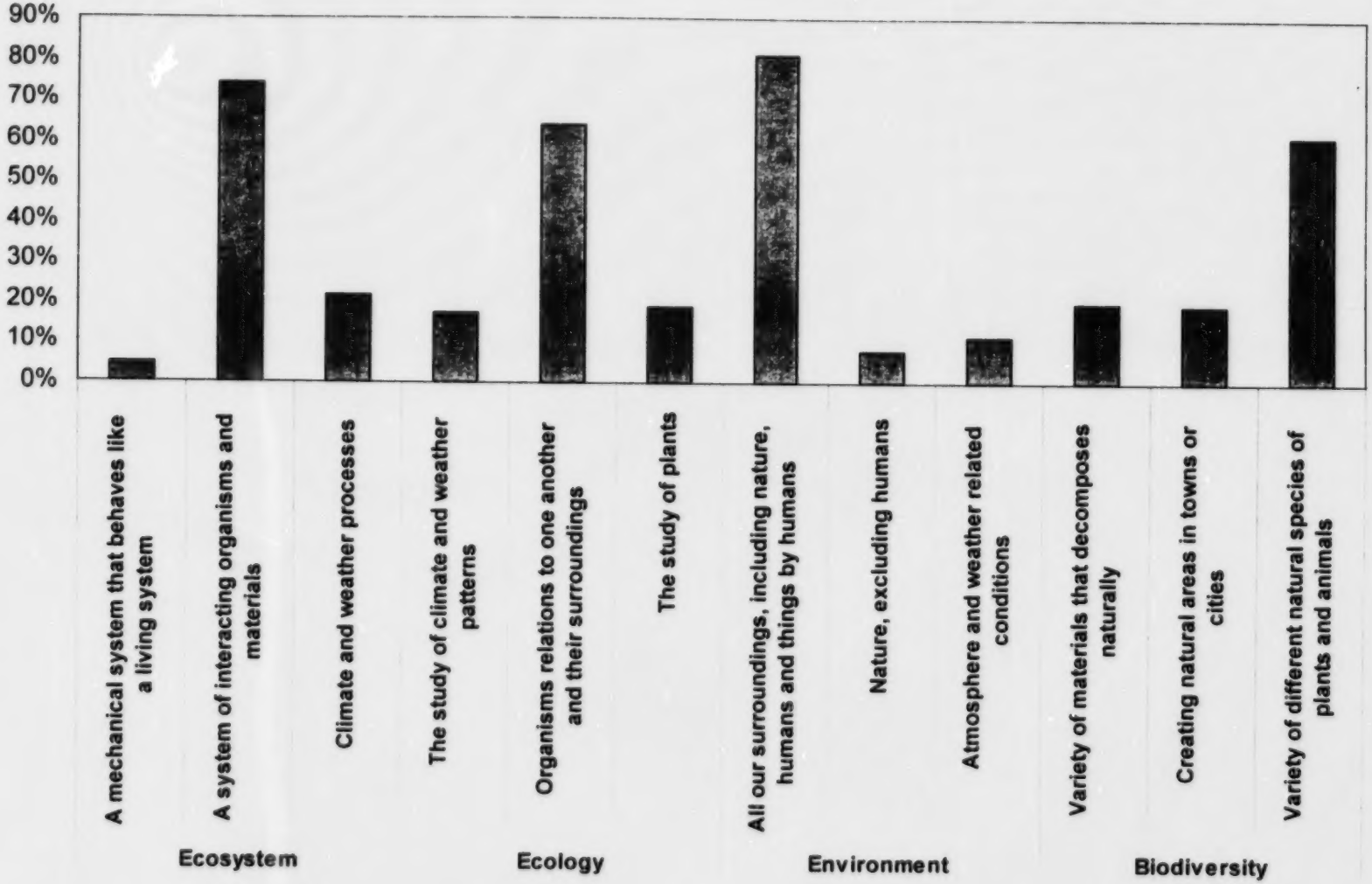
Chart 16. The Quality of Environment in Saskatchewan is significantly better than other areas of ...



Q18. For the last question, I am going to read four words and three definitions for each word. I would like you to choose one of the three definitions that you feel is correct

The majority of respondents (60% or above) know the meaning of those four words. The highest (81% of respondents) correctly identified the definition of environment (Chart 17). Conversely, 39% and 36% of respondents didn't understand the terms Biodiversity and Ecology respectively.

Chart 17. Response to the Definitions of Four Words by Region.



Department/Crown commissioning the work:

Executive Council

Date:	**June, 2000***
Supplier:	**Anderson/Fast & Associates, Saskatoon**
Cost:	**$18,400**

* No survey interviews were done with residents of the Wood River constituency due to a provincial by-election being held there during the period in which the public opinion survey was being conducted.

Omnibus
Provincial Public Opinion Survey

Prepared for:

Saskatchewan Executive Council
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Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Submitted by:

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June 2000

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Appendix I Survey Instrument

Appendix II Survey Demographics

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Federal issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, federal taxes, jobs and unemployment and the economy.
- Provincial issues that Saskatchewan residents tend to be most concerned with include health care, agriculture, provincial taxes, and highways and transportation.
- The majority of residents approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities.
- The vast majority of residents approve of changes the government is making to the justice system, including the way the government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program", targeting funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department, and the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes.
- More than two thirds of Saskatchewan residents consider people with blindness, deafness, paralysis or partial paralysis, or psychiatric illness as people with a disability.
- More than two thirds of residents think the education system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.
- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of elementary and secondary education in Saskatchewan is adequate or better.
- The majority of residents think high school students are prepared for entering post-secondary institutions; more than one third think high school students are prepared for entering the workforce.
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs are adequate or better.

METHODOLOGY

Anderson/Fast & Associates was retained by the Government of Saskatchewan to conduct the June 2000 public opinion survey with a representative sample of the Saskatchewan population. The June Omnibus Survey contains questions designed to explore public opinion regarding:

- federal issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- provincial issues of importance to Saskatchewan residents;
- the justice system;
- people with disabilities;
- education; and
- post-secondary education and skills training.

The questions for the survey were provided by Saskatchewan Executive Council and assembled into an interview format by Anderson/Fast. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that all of the questions being asked in the interview were understood by the general public and the information being gathered addressed the public opinion research objectives.

The sample frame for this public opinion research survey was constructed to obtain complete interviews from a random sample of 1,000 households throughout Saskatchewan.[1] To ensure proportionate representation from all areas of Saskatchewan, the province was divided into nine geographic sampling districts. Interview respondents were selected randomly from Saskatchewan telephone directories in each region using standard polling practices to ensure random selection of households and respondents. The sampling frame was also constructed to ensure proportionate representation of other important demographic characteristics evident within the provincial population such as gender, age, occupation, level of education and level of household income. This ensures that the opinions of all the various types of people who reside in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report.

One thousand residents of the province were interviewed over a ten day period between Monday, June 12 and Wednesday, June 21, 2000. Interviews were conducted by telephone at times that were appropriate and convenient for respondents - weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and weekends between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All interviews were conducted by Anderson/Fast's in-house public opinion interviewers using our *Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing* (CATI) call centre.

The Omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error of

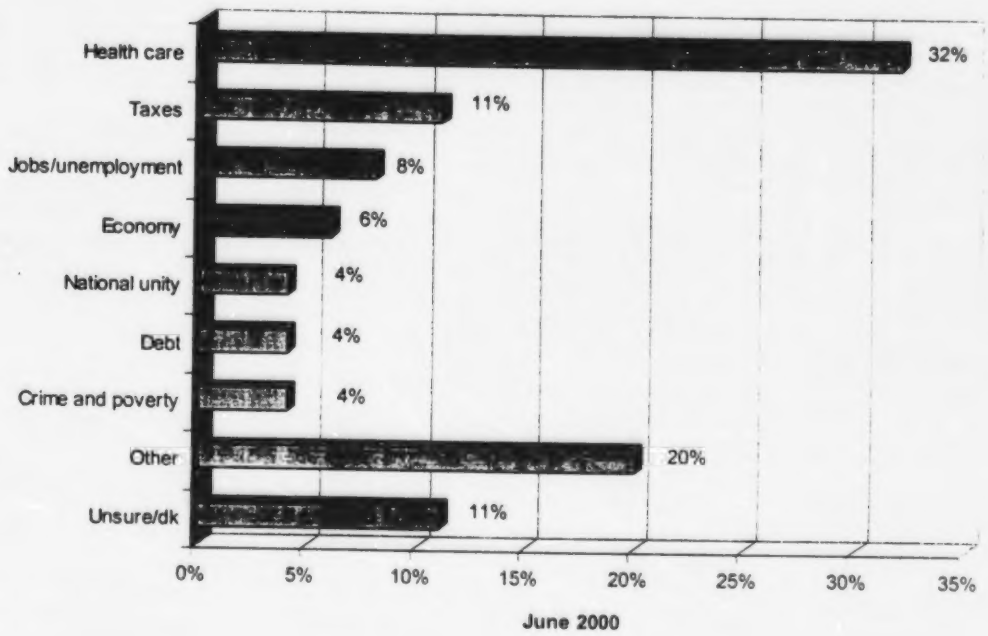
[1] With the exception of the area of Wood River, the rural constituency in south central Saskatchewan. No survey interviews were done with residents of this riding for the June 2000 Omnibus because of the provincial by-election being held there during the period in which the public opinion survey was being conducted.

plus or minus 3.1 percentage points: reliable results with low variability. Frequency charts for all public opinion issues are illustrated in this report.

Anderson/Fast designed and implemented programs to facilitate the statistical analysis of data using the industry standard SPSS computer program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data checking procedures were utilized at all times to ensure accuracy of the data. We also conducted statistical tests on the demographics to check for reliability and validity of the survey data.

1.0 GENERAL ISSUES

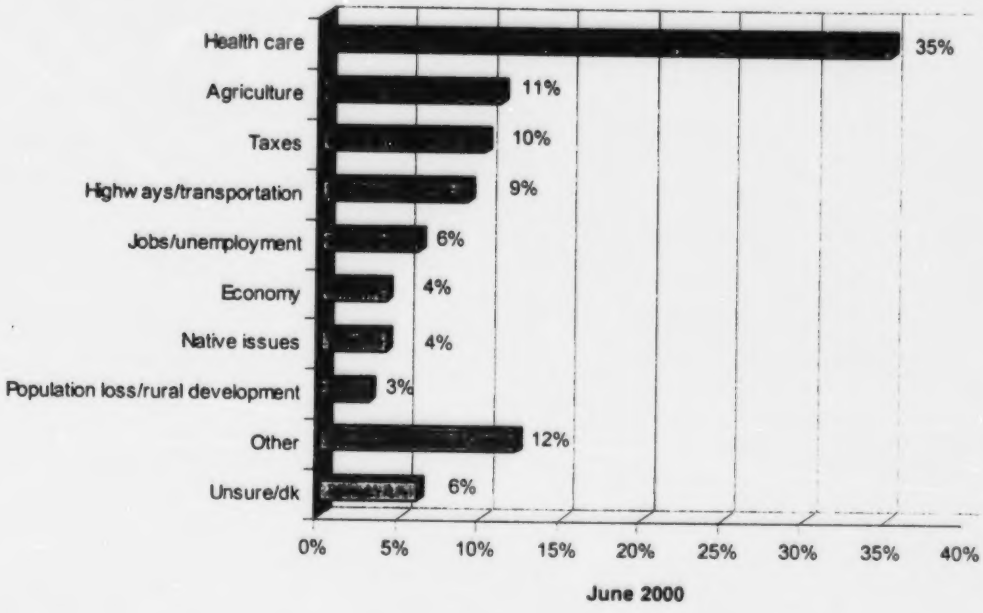
Question 1. In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Canada today?



- According to 32% of Saskatchewan residents, the most important issue facing Canada today is the health care system. Other important issues include federal taxes (11%), jobs and unemployment (8%), the economy (6%), national unity (4%), the national deficit and accumulated debt (4%) and crime and poverty (4%).

- Approximately 20% of respondents are primarily concerned with 'other' issues such as the federal government in general (3%), moral, social and religious issues (3%), agriculture (2%), the environment (2%), Native issues (2%) and education (2%).

Question 2. What do you think is the most important issue facing the province of Saskatchewan today?

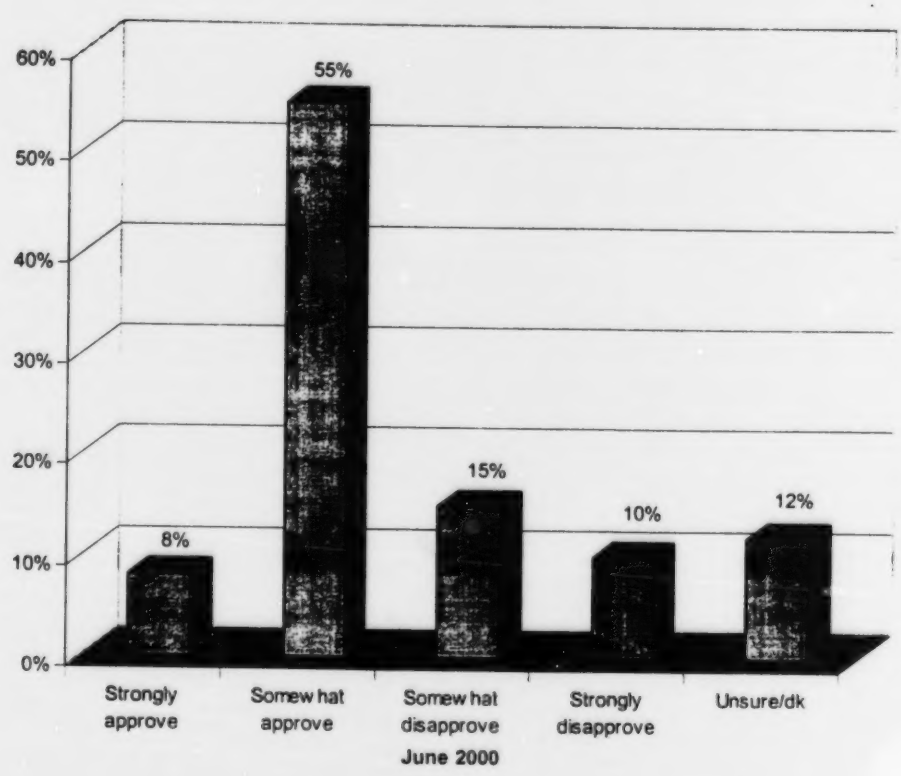


- The most important issue facing the province today, according to 35% of Saskatchewan residents, is health care. Approximately 11% of residents are concerned primarily with agriculture, 10% primarily with taxes, 9% highways and transportation, 6% with jobs and unemployment, 4% the provincial economy, 4% mention Native issues and 3% of respondents are primarily concerned with population loss and rural development.

- Included among 'other' important issues identified by 12% of respondents are the provincial government in general (2%), education (2%), social programs and welfare (2%) and crime and poverty (2%).

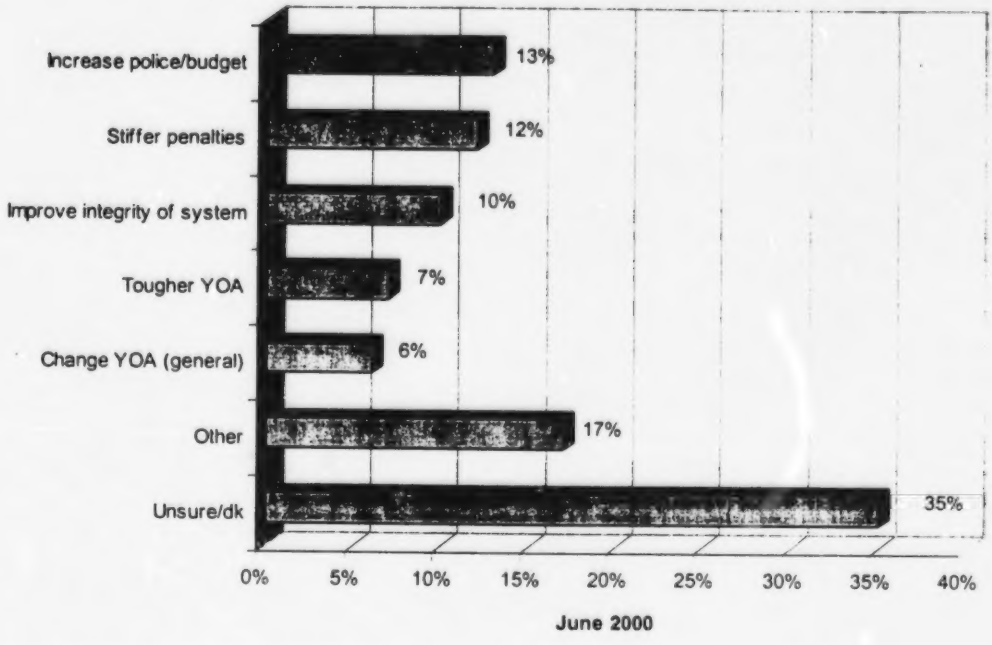
2.0 JUSTICE

Question 3. Do you approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities?



- The majority (63%) of residents approve of the way Saskatchewan's provincial government is handling the policing of communities.

Question 4. What would you like to see changed about the way Saskatchewan's government manages policing and the justice system?

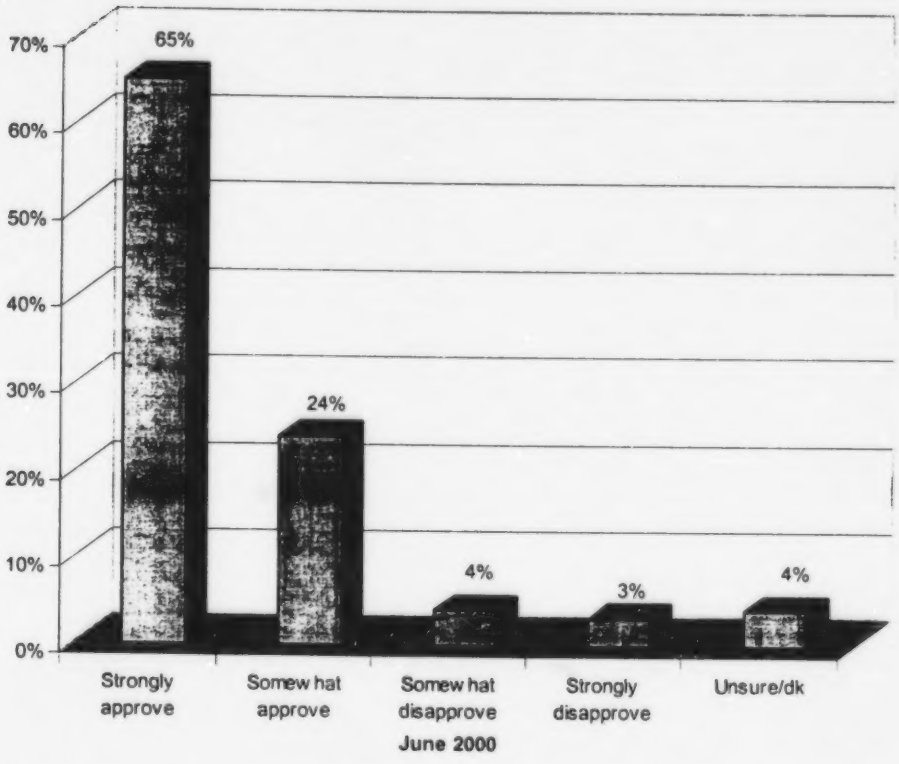


- Approximately 13% of Saskatchewan residents would like the government to increase the budget and hire more police, 12% would like stiffer penalties for offenders, 10% mention improving the integrity of the justice system, 7% think a tougher young offenders act and 6% would like changes to the young offenders act in general.

- About 17% of respondents mention 'other' changes they would like to see in the justice system such as increasing the emphasis on addressing Native issues (3%), and community issues (2%), treating victims of crime more fairly (2%) and addressing issues surrounding racism and the Saskatoon police force (2%).

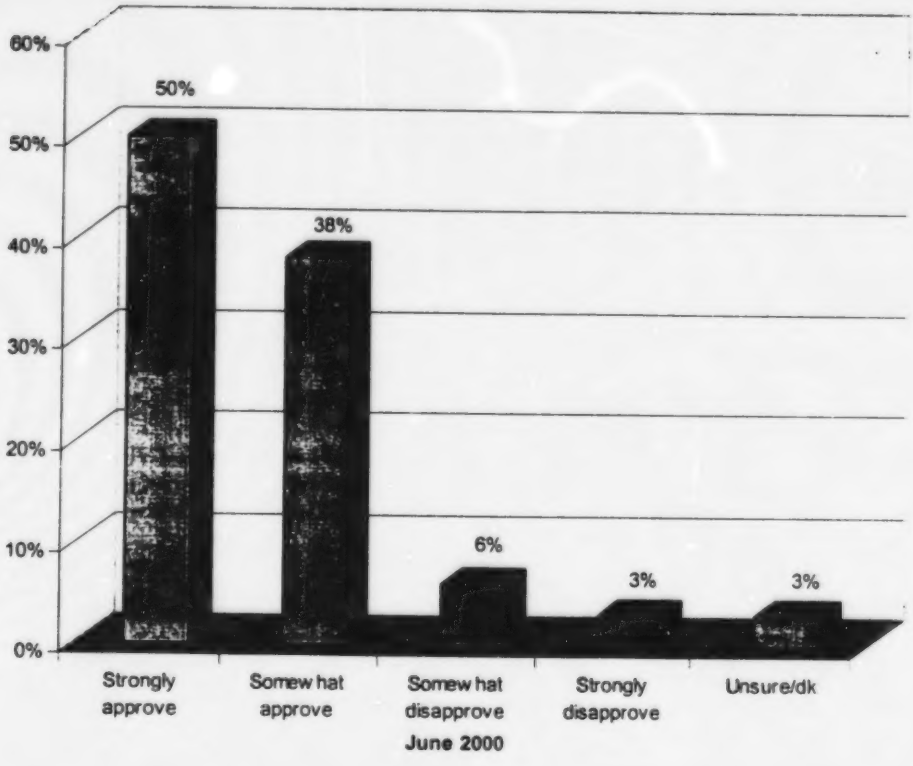
I am going to outline some of the changes the government is making to the justice system. I'd like you to tell me if you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the following initiatives:

Question 5a. The government has targeted funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program". It's a partnership between police and prosecutors aimed at identifying the minority of young offenders who commit most of the crimes, tracking them, and getting them off the streets.



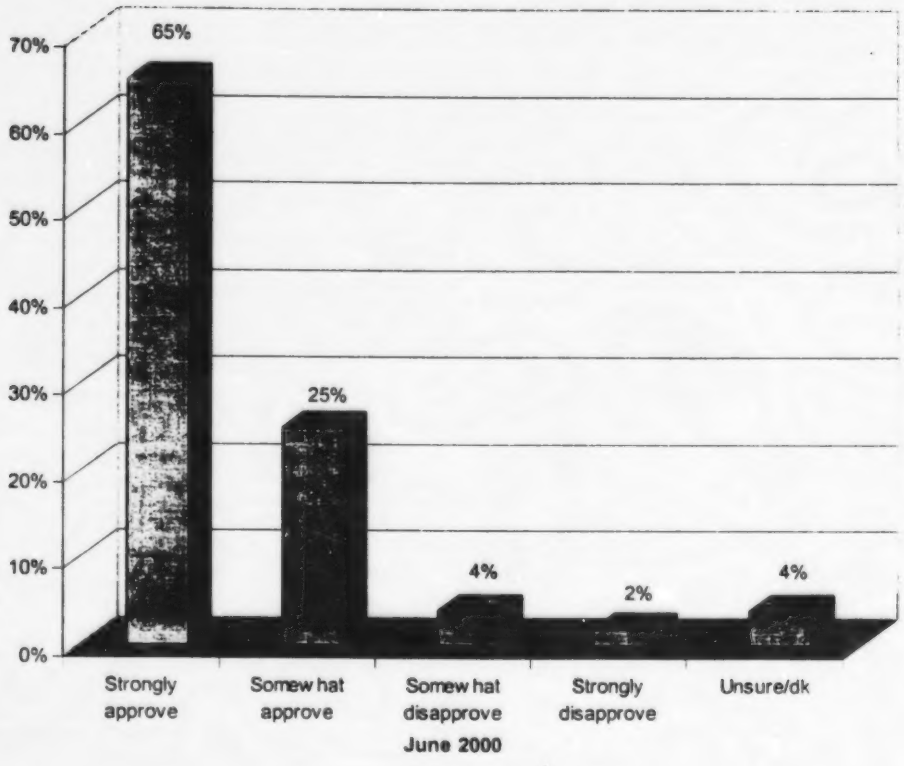
- The vast majority (89%) of residents approve of targeting funds to set up a program called the "Serious and Habitual Youth Offender Comprehensive Action Program".

Question 5b. The government has targeted funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice department by hiring more prosecutors and support staff so that trials take place more quickly, and prosecutors have more time to work on individual cases.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (88%) approve of targeting funds to strengthen the prosecutions branch of the justice system by hiring more prosecutors and support staff.

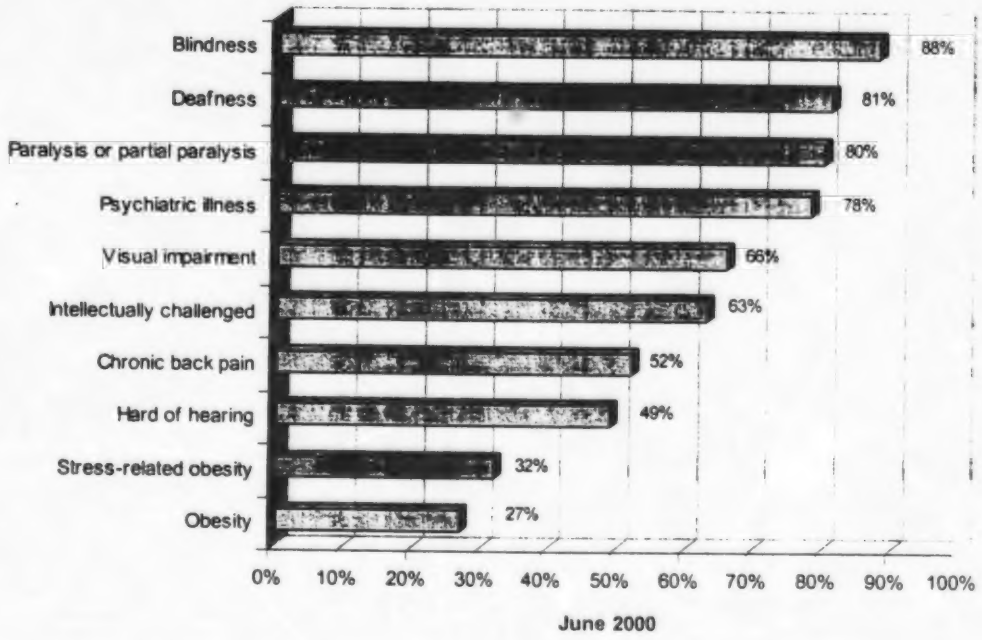
Question 5c. The government has launched a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography, and money laundering committed by organized groups like motorcycle gangs. The task force brings together the RCMP, city police forces, and a special prosecution team.



- The large majority of Saskatchewan residents (90%) approve of the launch of a "serious crimes task force" to fight crimes like the drug and sex trade, child pornography and money laundering by organized groups.

3.0 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Question 6. I'm going to read a list of physical and mental conditions. I'd like you to tell me if you would consider a person with one of these conditions to be a person with a disability:

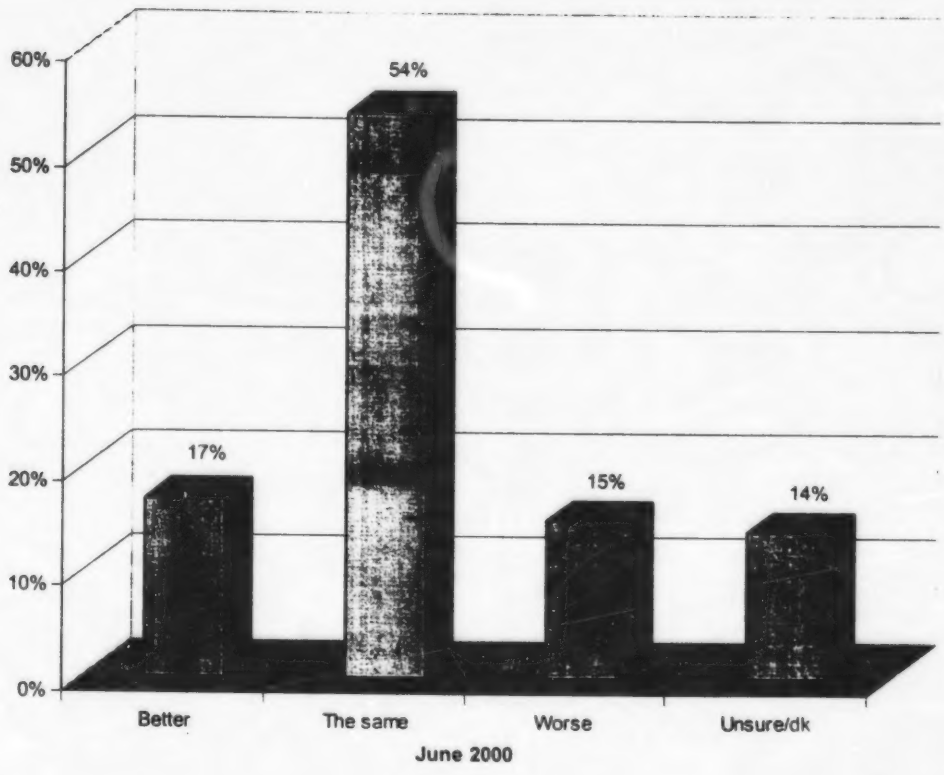


- More than two thirds of Saskatchewan residents consider people with blindness (88%), deafness (81%), paralysis or partial paralysis (80%) or phychiatric ilness (78%) to be people with disabilities.

- The majority of residents (66%) would consider people who have visual impairment, or who are intellectually challenged (63%) or who have chronic back pain (52%) to be people with disabilities.

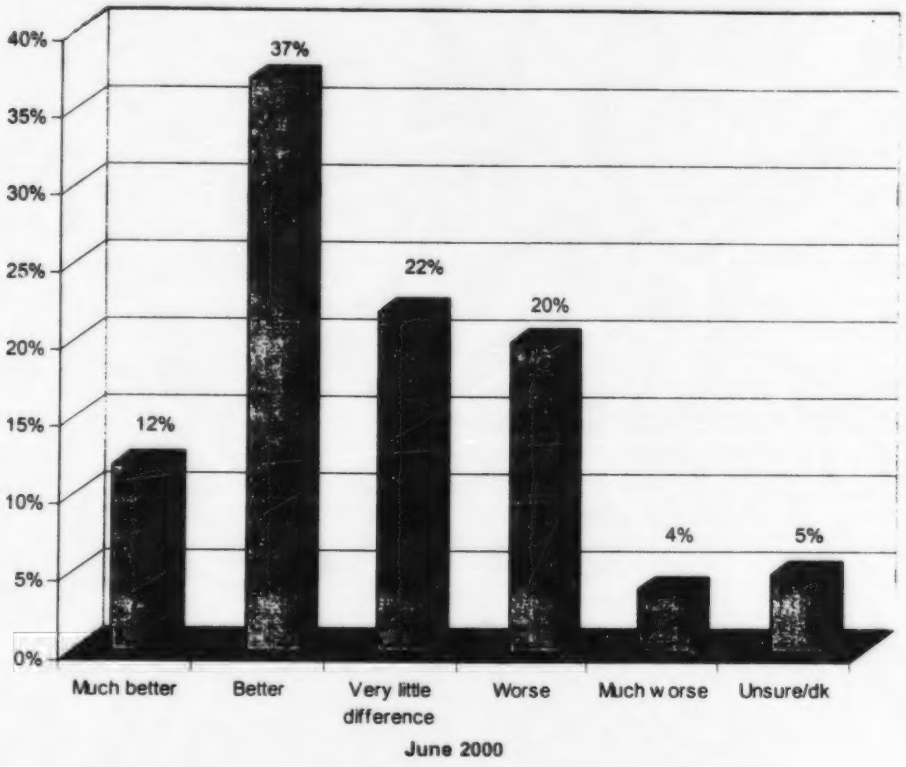
4.0 EDUCATION

Question 7. Compared to the rest of the country do you think the education system in Saskatchewan is better, the same or worse?



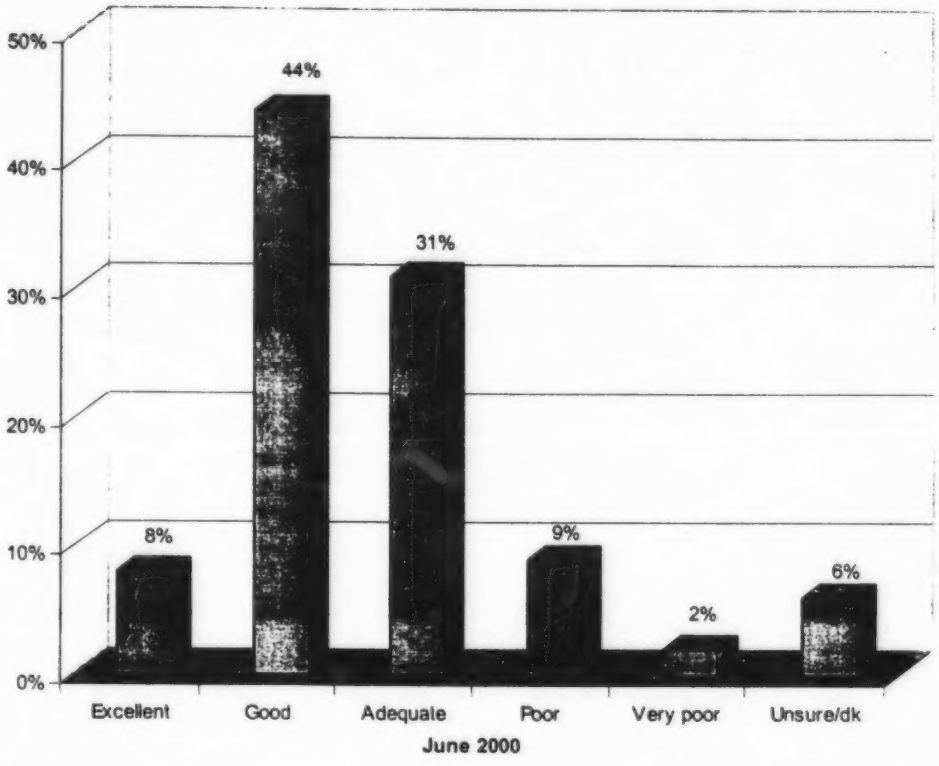
- More than two thirds (71%) of residents think the education system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

Question 8. When you think of your own school education, do you believe students' education today is much better, better, worse, much worse or very little different compared to yours?



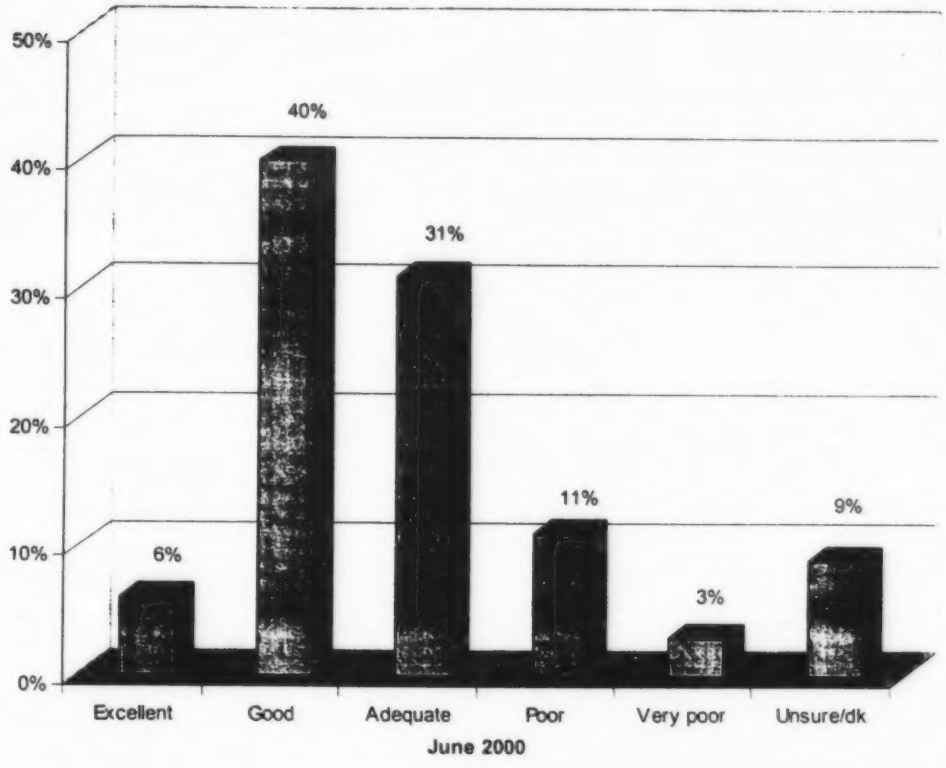
- Almost one half (49%) of Saskatchewan residents believe students' education today is better than the education they received; 22% believe there is very little difference.

Question 9. Do you think the quality of elementary education in Saskatchewan is generally excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor?



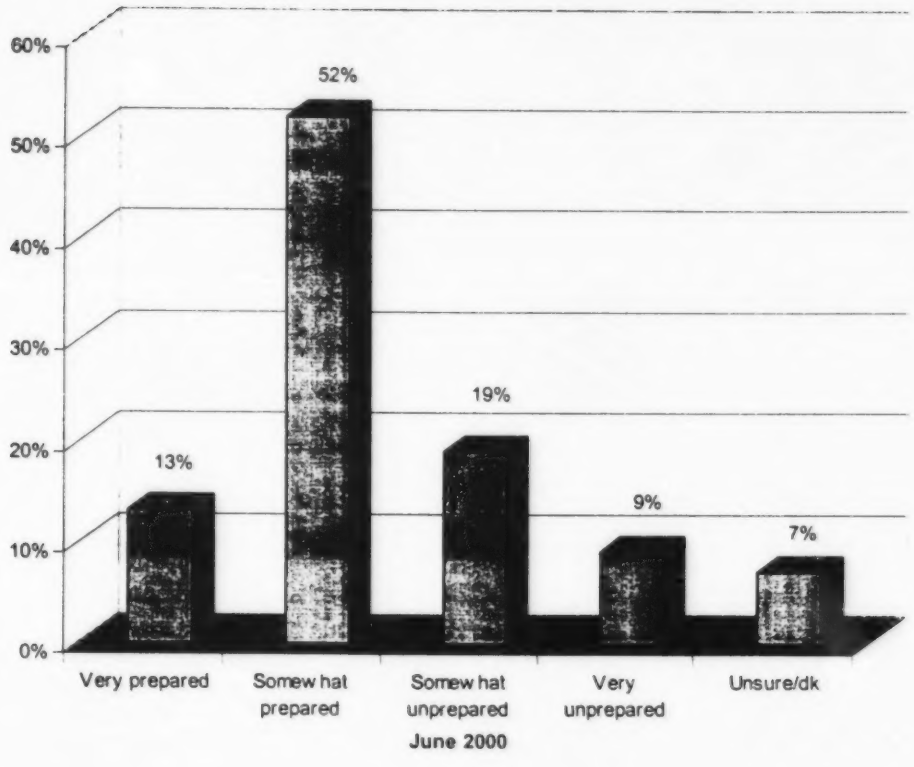
- The large majority (83%) of Saskatchewan residents think the quality of elementary education in Saskatchewan is adequate or better.

Question 10. Do you think that the quality of secondary or high school education in Saskatchewan is generally excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor?



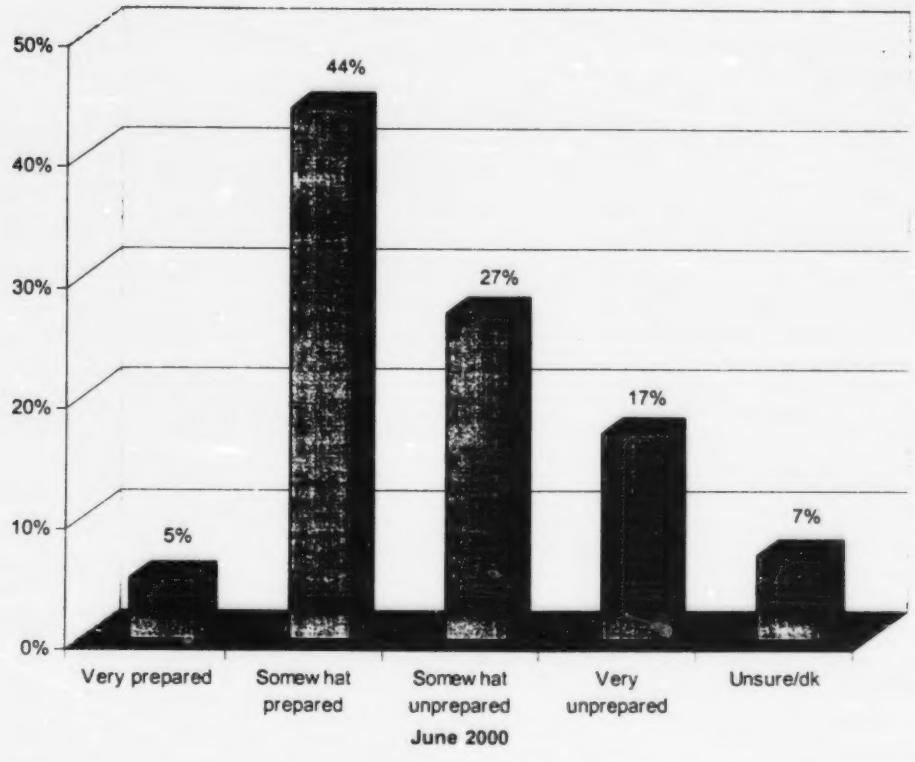
- More than three quarters (77%) of residents think the quality of secondary or high school education in Saskatchewan is adequate or better.

Question 11. Which best describes how well prepared you think Saskatchewan high school students are for entering post-secondary institutions like colleges or universities? Do you think they are very well prepared, only somewhat prepared, somewhat unprepared or very unprepared?



- The majority (65%) of residents think Saskatchewan high school students are prepared for entering post-secondary institutions like colleges or universities.

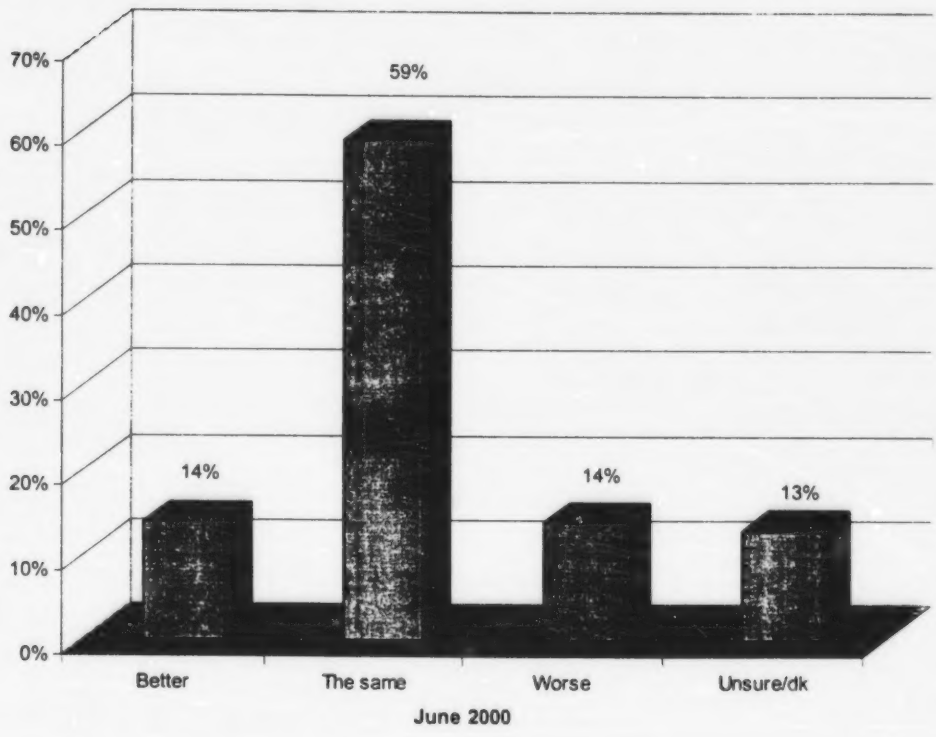
Question 12. How well prepared are high school students for entering the workforce?



- Slightly less than one half (49%) think Saskatchewan high school students are prepared for entering the workforce.

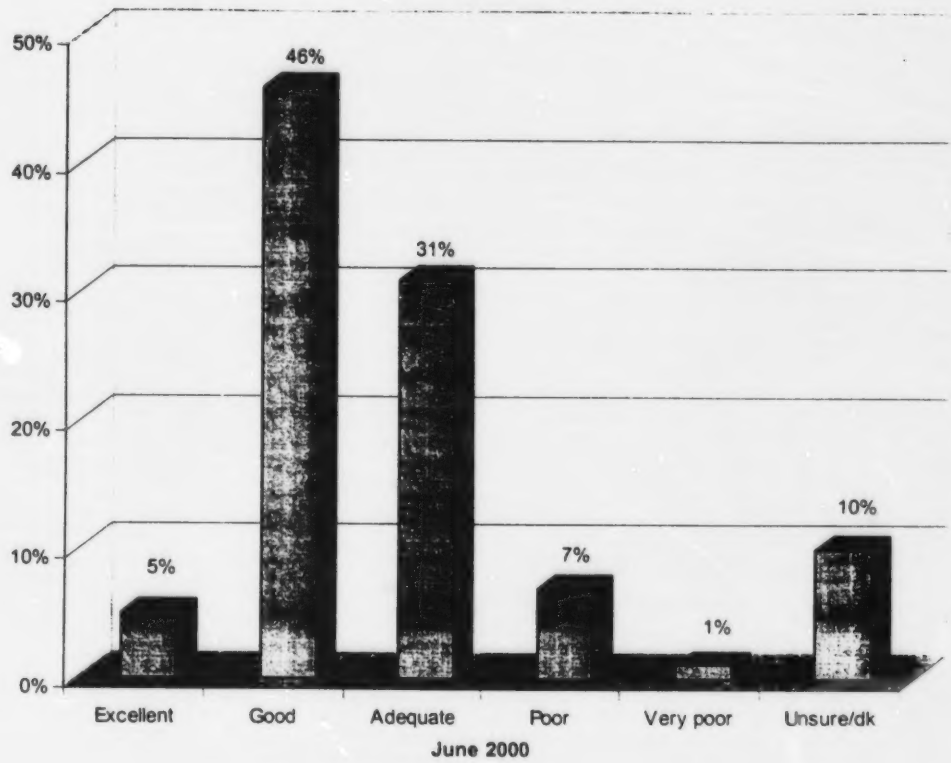
5.0 POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & SKILLS TRAINING

Question 13. Compared to the rest of the country, do you think the post-secondary education and training system in Saskatchewan is better, the same or worse?



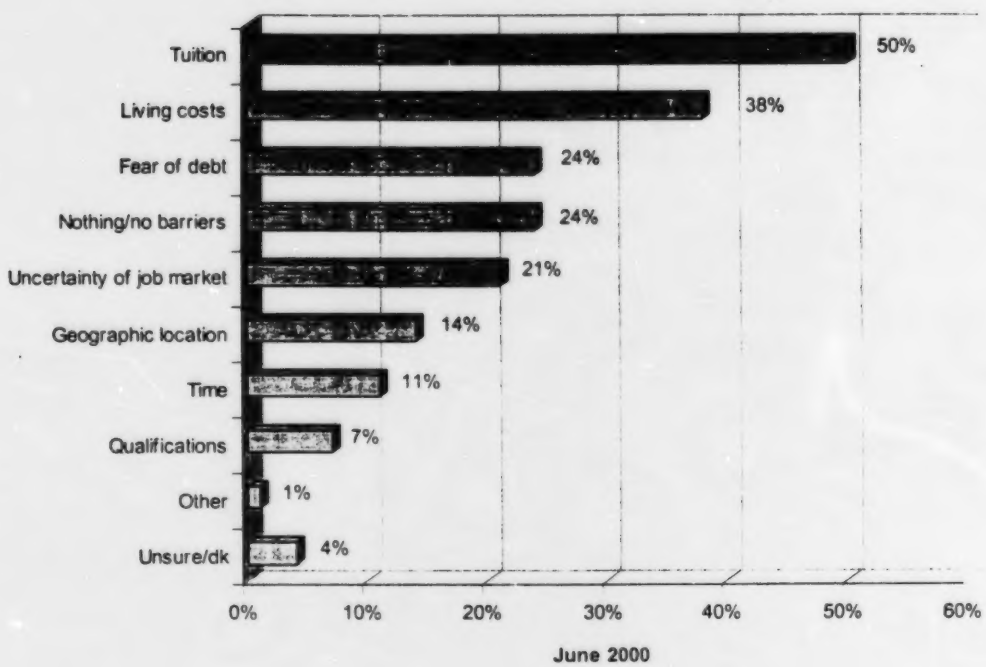
- The majority (73%) of residents think the post-secondary education and skills training system in Saskatchewan is the same or better than that of the rest of the country.

Question 14. Do you think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs is generally excellent, good, poor or very poor?



- The majority of residents (82%) think the quality of Saskatchewan's training programs is adequate or better.

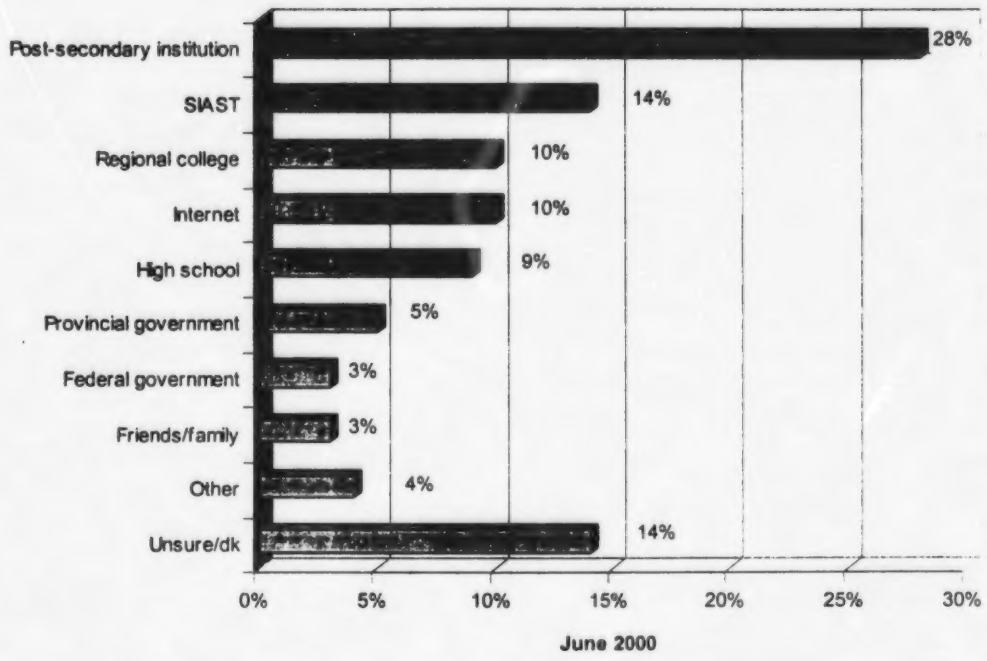
Question 15. What barriers do you or your family members experience, which prevent you from taking post-secondary education or training?



- One half (50%) of Saskatchewan residents identify tuition costs as a barrier for them or their family members to post-secondary education or training. Approximately 38% of residents suggest that living costs are a barrier, and 24% indicate apprehension with taking on the debt they associate with post-secondary education or training. Approximately 24% of Saskatchewan residents indicate there are no barriers which prevent them from taking post-secondary education or training.[1]

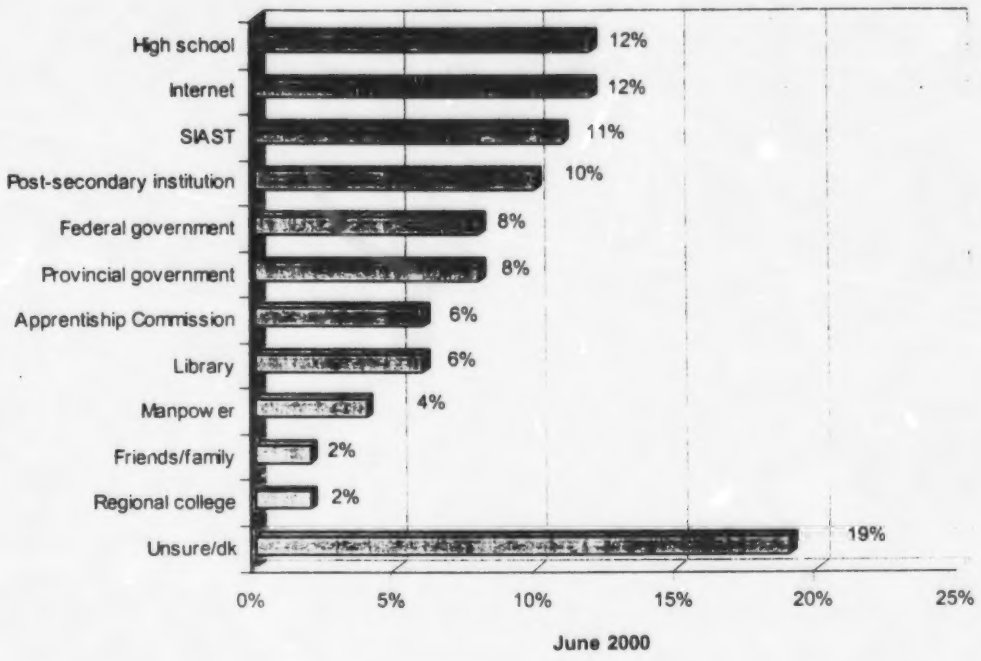
[1] Survey respondents were allowed to select more than one barrier: multiple response, therefore, sums to greater than 100%.

Question 16. Where would you go to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan?



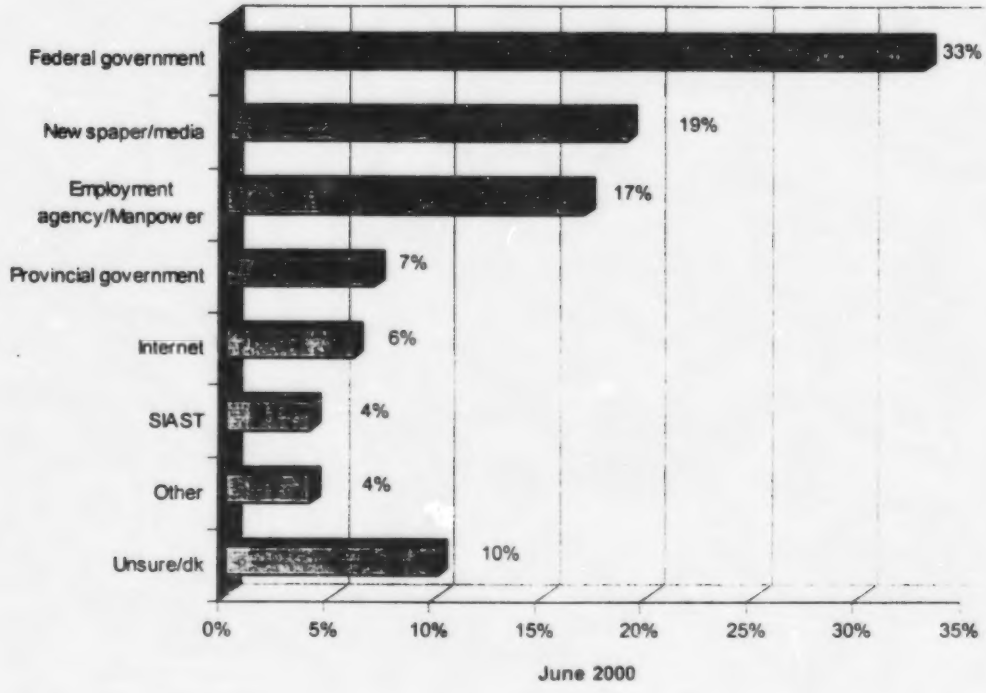
- More than one quarter (28%) of residents would go to a post-secondary institution to get information about post-secondary education and training opportunities in Saskatchewan.

Question 17. Where would you go for career information?



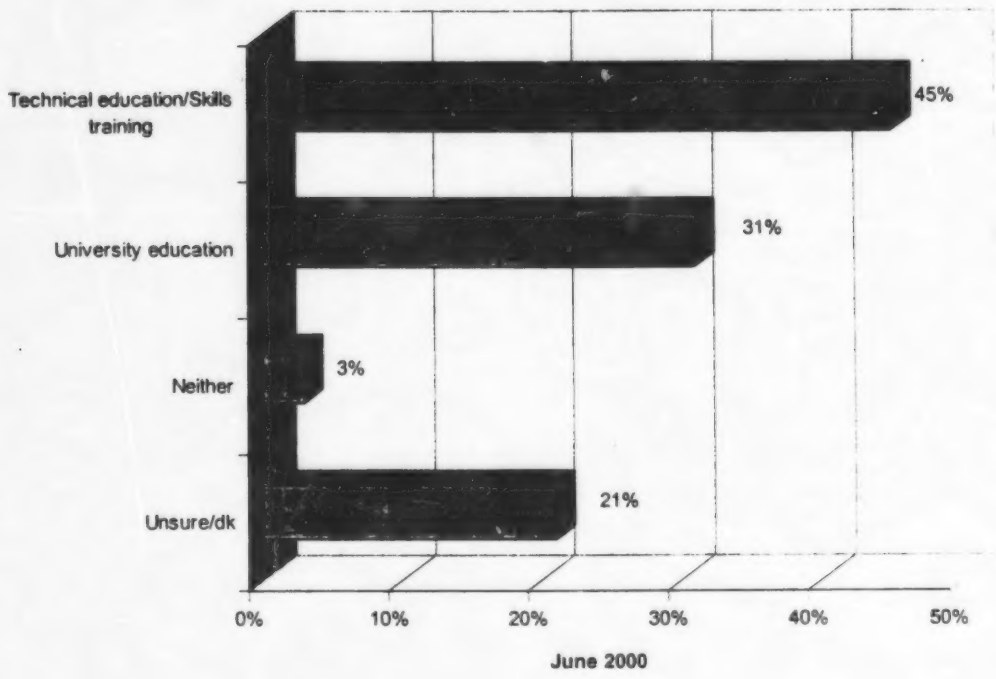
- Approximately 12% of Saskatchewan residents would go to a high school to get career information, another 12% would get career information over the Internet, 11% would get information from SIAST and 10% would go to a post-secondary institution.

Question 18. Where would you go for information about job opportunities or to find workers?



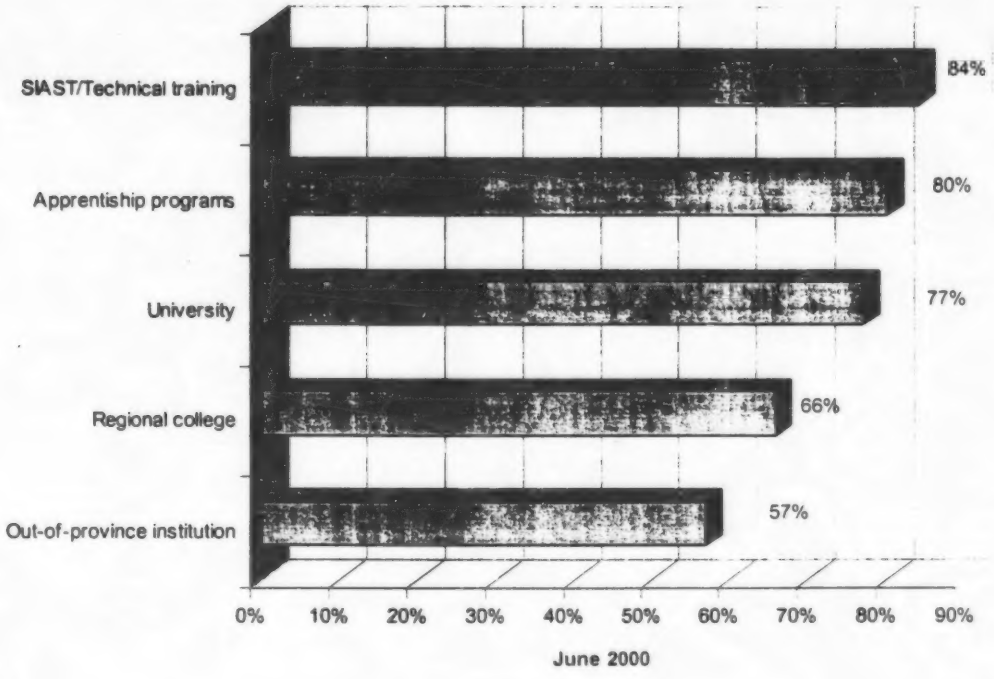
- One third (33%) of residents would go to federal government agencies for information about job opportunities or to find workers, 19% would look to newspapers and other media sources and 17% would go to an employment agency or 'Manpower' (HRDC).

Question 19. If you were advising a young person today, would you recommend they choose technical education and skills training or a university education?



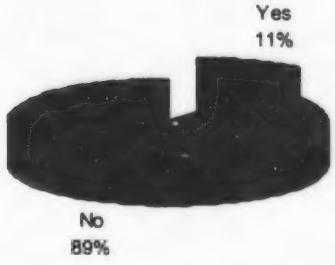
- Slightly less than one half 45% of Saskatchewan residents would recommend technical education and skills training if they were advising a young person today; 31% would recommend a university education.

Question 20. Which institution would you suggest they attend? Would you recommend...?



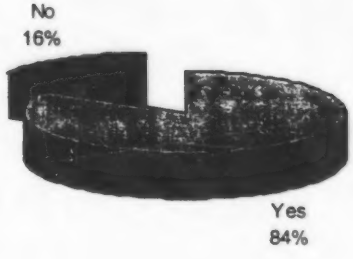
- If they were advising a young person today, Saskatchewan residents would recommend they attend SIAST or a technical training school (84%), apprenticeship programs (80%), university (77%), a regional college (66%) or an out-of-province institution (57%).

Question 21. In the past month have you taken post-secondary education or training?



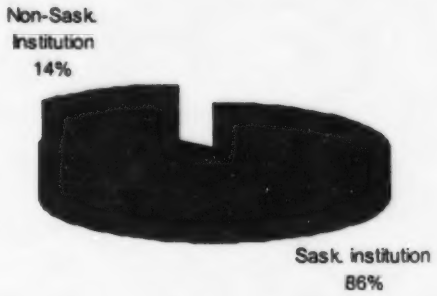
- The majority of Saskatchewan residents (89%) have not taken post-secondary education or training in the past month; about 11% have.

Question 22. Was this education or training in person?



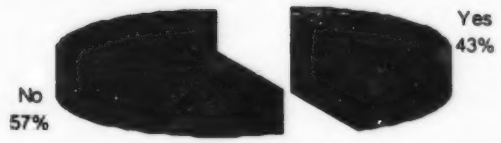
- Of those residents who have taken post-secondary training and education in the past month, the large majority (84%, or 9% of all respondents) took the education or training in person.

Question 23. Was this education at a Saskatchewan institution or a non-Saskatchewan institution?



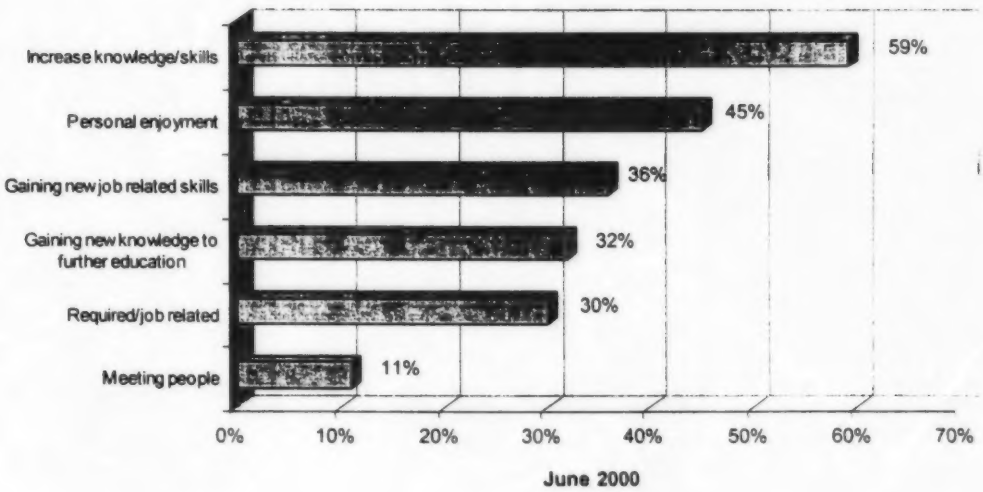
- Of those respondents who have taken education or training in the past month, the large majority (86%, or 9% of all respondents) did so through a Saskatchewan institution.

Question 24. In the past month have you participated in informal education or training such as attending public lectures or reading self-help books?



- Approximately 43% of Saskatchewan residents have participated in informal education or training in the past month.

Question 25. What were the primary reasons for your participation? Was it for...?



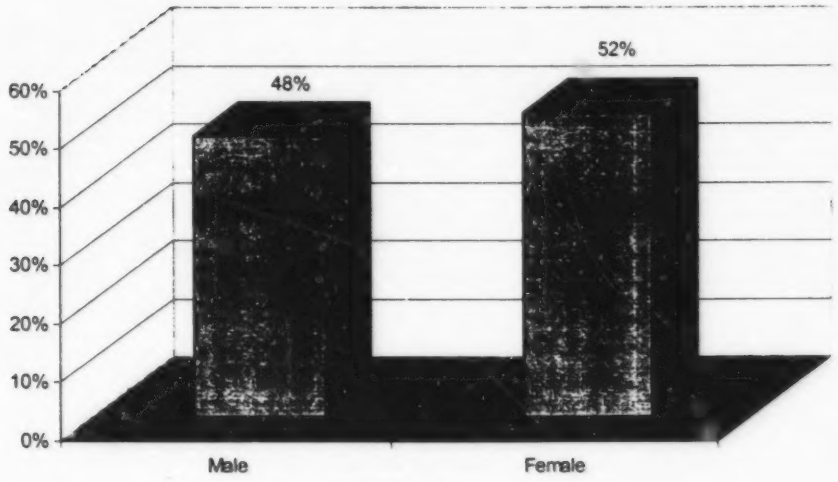
- Of those respondents who have participated in informal education or training in the past month, the majority (59%, or 25% of all respondents) did so to increase their knowledge and skills and 45% (19% of all respondents) did so for personal enjoyment.

APPENDIX II SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The omnibus public opinion sample frame is constructed to facilitate proportionate representation of various demographic characteristics evident within the province of Saskatchewan. This ensures that opinions of all the various types of residents in Saskatchewan are proportionately represented in the statistical measurements documented in this report. The demographic distributions from the survey sample generally parallel the province's actual population distributions, as measured by Statistics Canada census data.

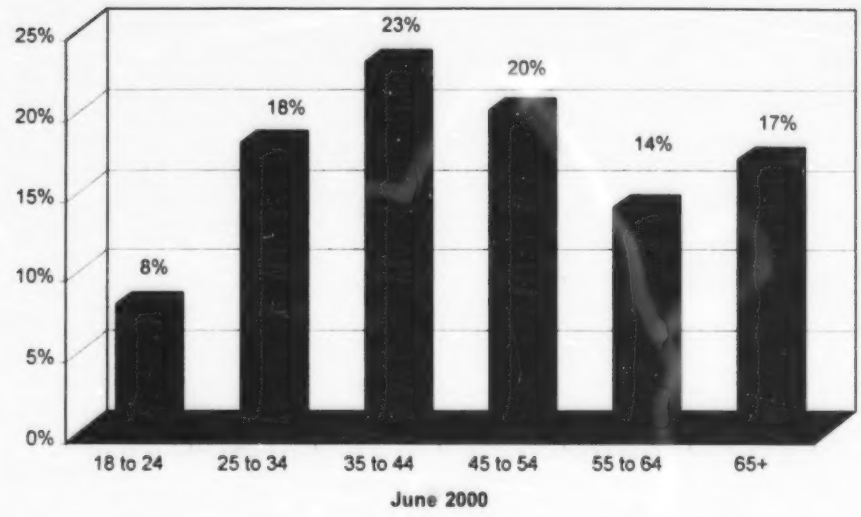
The omnibus survey sample size of 1,000 people yields public opinion measurements with a statistical level of confidence of 95 percent within an overall margin of error for the point estimates contained in this report of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

Survey sample gender distribution

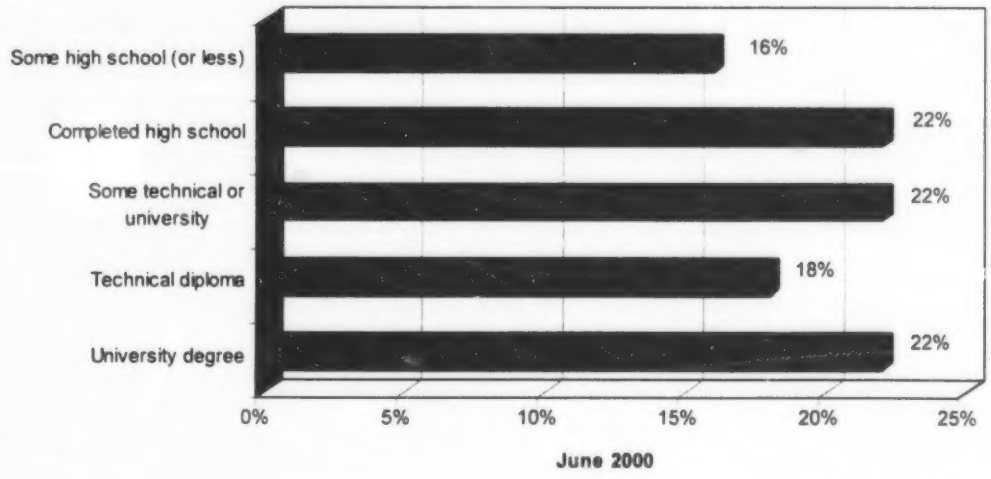


June 2000

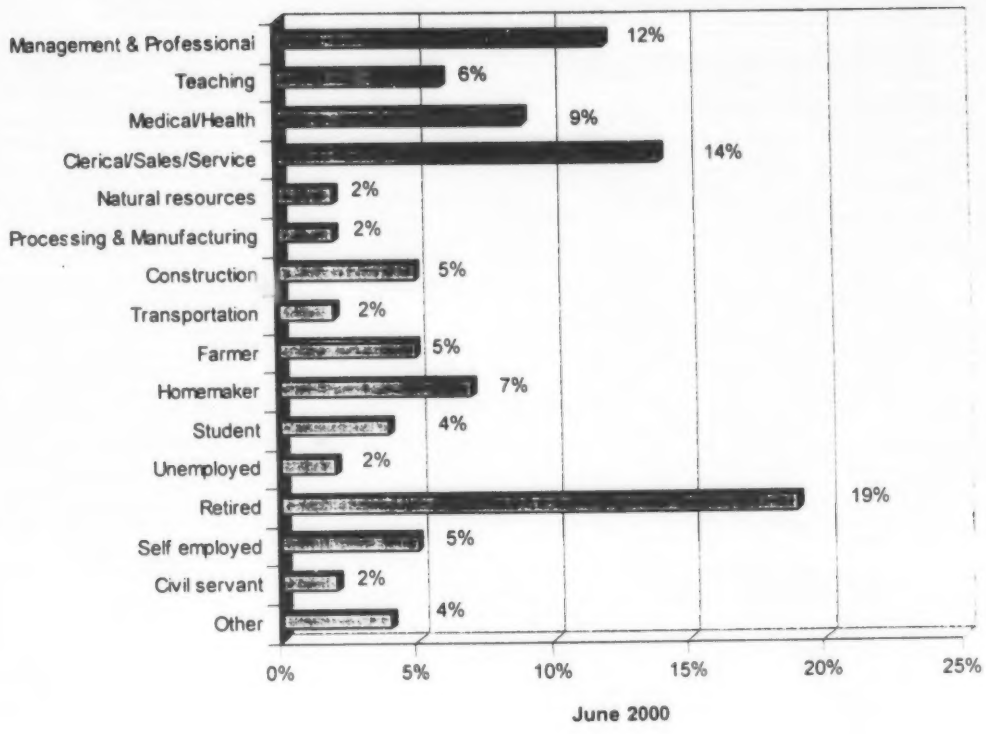
Survey sample age distribution



Survey sample education distribution

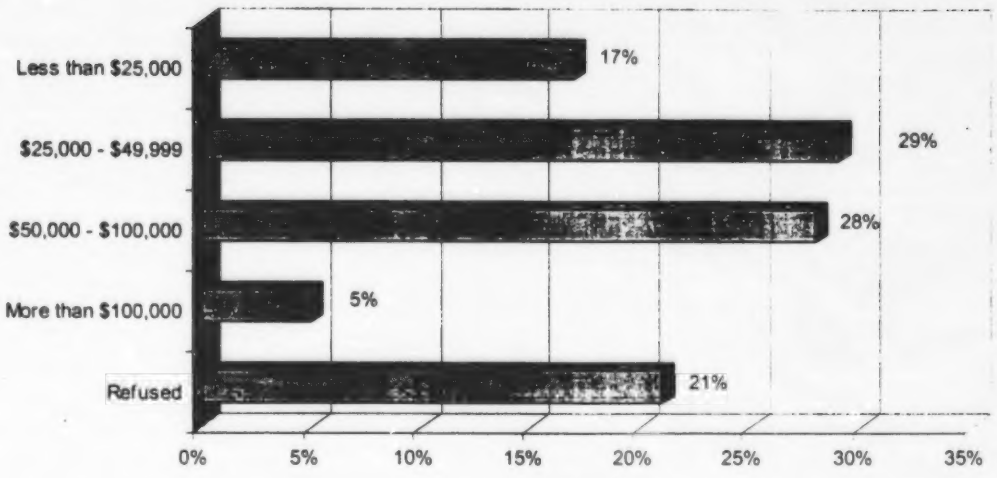


Survey sample occupation distribution



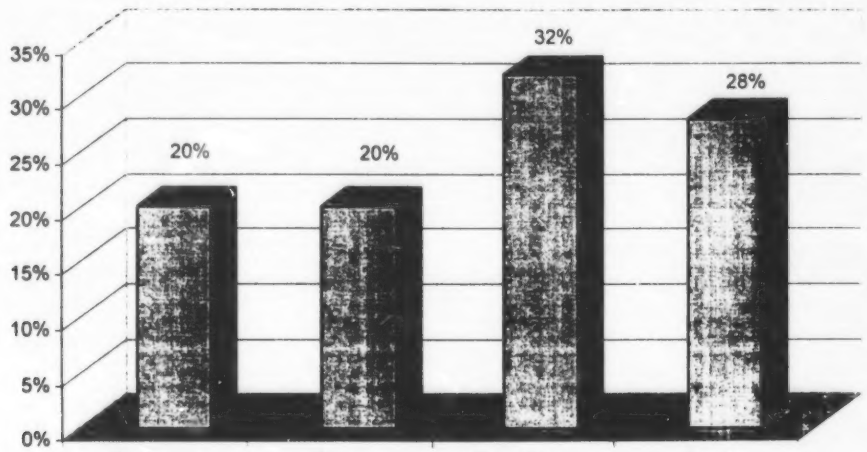
June 2000

Survey sample income distribution



June 2000

Survey sample regional distribution



June 2000